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The Position of Adam in Latter-Day Scripture and Theology

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THE POSITION OF ADAM
IN LATTER-DAY SAINT SCRIPTURE AND THEOLOGY

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE
FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF RELIGION
OF
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE
OF
MASTER OF ARTS

by
RODNEY TURNER
August, 1953

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There are others who here go unnamed, but who have every right to feel that they have had a real, though invisible hand, in the accomplishment of this work.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Problem and Its Justification

The purpose of this study is to determine, in so far as is possible, the views held by various leaders of the Latter-day Saints relative to Adam; and more especially, the official doctrine of the Church as to his place in its theology.

The problem is based, in part, on the divergent, and oft times bitter, claims and counter-claims of members, ex-members, and non-members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints over "Mormon" teachings concerning Adam in the light of a certain address given by President Brigham Young in 1852. Indeed, this address, and the man who gave it, remain the focal point of much discussion to this day.

From time to time, articles, anti-Mormon in spirit and purpose, appear attacking the Latter-day Saints and citing the aforementioned address as irrefutable evidence of the "blasphemous beliefs" of Mormonism in general, and its concept of God and man's relationship to him in particular. It is hoped that this study will prove of some value in establishing the actual doctrines of the Church, thus revealing the truth--whatever that truth may be. It is in that spirit that this thesis has been written; the writer trusts that it will be received in a like one.

The Basic Questions Involved

There are eight basic questions for which this thesis seeks answers. Because of the almost universal prominence given his views, and because he is the "focal point" of the over-all problem, four of these questions relate to the teachings of Brigham Young. The eight questions are:

1. Were Brigham Young's remarks relative to Adam misinterpreted?
2. Were his remarks misquoted in official church publications?
3. Where did he obtain his views concerning Adam?
4. What were his views concerning Adam?
5. What have been the views of other church authorities?
6. What did Joseph Smith teach?
7. What do the "standard works" reveal concerning Adam's identity?
8. What is the official doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today?

The Method of Study

The nature of the problem demands that the writer divorce himself from any doctrinal expressions or opinions; he has limited himself to the evaluation and analysis of the quoted material alone. The doctrinal correctness of any given view or interpretation--in terms of ultimate truth--is something which could not enter into any objective study of this kind. The writer does not pretend to know of any means for ascertaining such theological truth in keeping with the prescribed methodology of thesis research. The business

of this study is the collection and correlation of manifest fact, not the substantiation of theological doctrine.

The writer has relied heavily upon the direct statements of those concerned as much as possible. This will decrease the likelihood of errors in analysis on the writer's part, and dubiety on the reader's. It will also permit the quotes to be introduced directly into the body of the thesis rather than have them relegated to the oft unfingered isolation of an appendix.

Much of the material is presented in its chronological sequence. For example, the remarks of President Young appear in essentially the same order in which he uttered them.

The writer has attempted to select those statements which are the most pertinent, the least ambiguous, and, therefore, best able to stand alone and unsullied by needless commentary. The following arbitrary rules of procedure have guided the actual writing of this study:

1. Be objective.
2. Select those statements which most clearly and completely reveal a given person's views.
3. Avoid the use of isolated, ambiguous references.
4. Accept all statements literally, unless they are obviously meant to be understood otherwise.
5. In general, base all conclusions on what is actually said; not on what is supposedly left unsaid.
6. Look for an overall pattern of thought in a given person's pronouncements.
7. Differentiate between a principle and a fact.
8. Be honest in the use of the material, and in your conclusions.

Limitations of the Study

This study does not pretend to include all facets of Latter-day Saint doctrine as it relates to Adam. Such areas as Adam's pre-existent life, his "fall," mortal life, etc., comprise another study in themselves; to have introduced them herein would have been to pass beyond the outermost limits which define, and confine, a thesis. Therefore, this study is limited to an examination of certain material relevant to Adam's identity and accepted position in Latter-day Saint theology.

CHAPTER II

THE DISCOURSE OF APRIL 9, 1852

Background of the discourse.--The old tabernacle was filled to overflowing as President Young arose to address the evening session of conference. He spoke of the "mysteries" and said that many of the "Elders of Israel" desired to know of them; but he warned his listeners that:

Here is the place for you to teach great mysteries to your brethren, because here are those who can correct you. This fault the Elders of Israel do not fall into in this Tabernacle, although they may in private house (sic) and neighborhoods. When a man is capable of correcting you, and of giving you light, and true doctrine, do not get up an altercation, but submit to be taught like little children, and strive with all your might to understand. The privileges of those who dwell here are greater than the privileges of those who dwell abroad. When your duties call you into foreign lands, and you there exhaust your stock of knowledge and wisdom, and you are not in possession of the keys to obtain that instruction which you desire, it is because you are far from the right fountain--far from the body, where all the members are in lively operation--. . . . When your face is turned from the body, let mysteries alone, for this is the only place for you to be corrected if wrong.¹

Following this admonition to the membership, President Young briefly discussed amusements and tithing after which he said: "I will close this sermon, as I intend to preach another before I present the subject I more particularly wish to speak upon." These words introduced Brigham Young's controversial so-called "Adam-God" address, now quoted in its entirety.

¹G. D. Watt et al. (eds.), Journal of Discourses (Liverpool: 1854-84), I, 46-47. Hereafter designated as J. of D.

The Discourse Itself

My next sermon will be to both Saint and sinner. One thing has remained a mystery in this kingdom up to this day. It is in regard to the character of the well-beloved Son of God, upon which subject the Elders of Israel have conflicting views. Our God and Father in heaven, is a being of tabernacle, or, in other words, He has a body, with parts the same as you and I have; and is capable of showing forth His works to organized beings, as, for instance, in the world in which we live, it is the result of the knowledge and infinite wisdom that dwell in His organized body. His son Jesus Christ has become a personage of tabernacle, and has a body like his father. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of the Lord, and issues forth from Himself, and may properly be called God's minister to execute His will in immensity; being called to govern by His influence and power; but He is not a person of tabernacle as we are, and as our Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ are. The question has been, and is often, asked, who it was that begat the Son of the Virgin Mary. The infidel world has concluded that if what the Apostles wrote about his father and mother be true, and the present marriage discipline acknowledged by Christendom be correct, then Christians must believe that God is the father of an illegitimate son, in the person of Jesus Christ! The infidel fraternity teach that to their disciples. I will tell you how it is. Our Father in Heaven begat all the spirits that ever were, or ever will be, upon this earth; and they were born spirits in the eternal world. Then the Lord by His power and wisdom organized the mortal tabernacle of man. We were made first spiritual, and afterwards temporal.

Now hear it, O inhabitants of the earth, Jew and Gentile, Saint and sinner! When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He helped to make and organize this world. He is MICHAEL, the Archangel, the ANCIENT OF DAYS! about whom holy men have written and spoken--He is our Father and our God, and the only God with whom WE have to do. Every man upon the earth, professing Christians and non-professing, must hear it, and will know it sooner or later. They came here, organized the raw material, and arranged in their order the herbs of the field, the trees, the apple, the peach, the plum, the pear, and every other fruit that is desirable and good for man; the seed was brought from another sphere, and planted in this earth. The thistle, the thorn, the brier, and the obnoxious weed did not appear until after the earth was cursed. When Adam and Eve had eaten of the forbidden fruit, their bodies became mortal from its effects, and therefore their offspring were mortal. When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus the Father had begotten him

in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who is the Father? He is the first of the human family; and when he took a tabernacle, it was begotten by his Father in heaven, after the same manner as the tabernacles of Cain, Abel, and the rest of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve; from the fruits of the earth, the first earthly tabernacles were originated by the Father, and so on in succession. I could tell you much more about this; but were I to tell you the whole truth, blasphemy would be nothing to it, in the estimation of the superstitious and overrighteous of mankind. However I have told you the truth as far as I have gone. I have heard men preach upon the divinity of Christ, and exhaust all the wisdom they possessed. All Scripturalists, and approved theologians who were considered exemplary for piety and education, have undertaken to expound on this subject, in every age of the Christian era; and after they have done all, they are obliged to conclude by exclaiming "great is the mystery of godliness," and tell nothing.

It is true that the earth was organized by three distinct characters, namely, Eloheim, Yahovah, and Michael, these three forming a quorum, as in all heavenly bodies, and in organizing element, perfectly represented in the Deity, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Again, they will try to tell how the divinity of Jesus is joined to his humanity, and exhaust all their mental faculties, and wind up with this profound language, as describing the soul of man, "it is an immaterial substance!" What a learned idea! Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden, and who is our Father in Heaven. Now, let all who may hear these doctrines, pause before they make light of them, or treat them with indifference, for they will prove their salvation or damnation.

I have given you a few leading items upon this subject but a great deal more remains to be told. Now, remember from this time forth, and for ever, that Jesus Christ was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. I will repeat a little anecdote. I was in conversation with a certain learned professor upon this subject, when I replied, to this idea-- "if the Son was begotten by the Holy Ghost, it would be very dangerous to baptize and confirm females, and give the Holy Ghost to them, lest he should beget children, to be palmed upon the Elders by the people, bringing the Elders into great difficulties."

Treasure up these things in your hearts. In the Bible you have read the things I have told you to-night; but you have not known what you did read. I have told you no more than you are conversant with; but what do the people in Christendom, with the Bible in their hands, know about this

subject? Comparitively nothing.¹

Analysis of the Discourse

President Young begins by stating that the "character" or nature of Christ has been a "mystery" among the saints and a source of "conflicting views" among the "Elders of Israel" to that time. He then briefly describes the individuals in the godhead saying that "our God and Father in heaven" and His son, Jesus Christ, were personages of tabernacle comparable to mortal men, but that the Holy Ghost was not so endowed.

He then states that the question as to the identity of the actual father of Christ's mortal body is "often asked," and that some people would brand Christ "an illegitimate son" of God if the account by the apostles is true concerning Jesus' parentage. With this introduction Brigham Young gives his views of the matter briefly as follows:

1. God the Father begat the spirits of all those born on this earth.
2. God then "organized" man's physical body.
- ✓ 3. Adam entered Eden with a "celestial" body.
4. Eve, "one of" Adam's wives came with him.
5. Adam assisted in the organization of this earth.
6. Adam is Michael, the Archangel, the Ancient of Days.
7. Adam is "our Father and our God, and the only God with whom WE have to do."
8. Seed for earth's vegetation was "brought from another sphere."
9. The mortality of Adam and Eve resulted from eating

¹Ibid., pp. 50,51.

forbidden fruit.

10. Christ is the literal son of the Father, not of the Holy Ghost.
11. God the Father is "the first of the human family."
12. God the Father's body was begotten in turn by his Father.
13. God the Father "originated" the first earthly bodies on this planet from the "fruits of the earth."
14. This process of origination has continued "on in succession."
15. The earth was organized by three distinct persons, Eloheim, Yahovah, and Michael.
16. The physical body of Christ was begotten "by the same character that was in the garden of Eden, and who is our Father in Heaven."

A mystery has been spoken of.--It is evident that

Brigham Young felt he had revealed something of a mystery; something that was possibly new and shocking to at least a portion of his audience. That it was new would appear from his statement that Christ's character "has remained a mystery in this kingdom up to this day." That it was possibly shocking is seen in such expressions as: "were I to tell you the whole truth, blasphemy would be nothing to it, in the estimation of the superstitious and overrighteous of mankind." and "let all who may hear these doctrines, pause before they make light of them, or treat them with indifference, for they will prove their salvation or damnation."

Why it was spoken of.--It is not known for certain why President Young discussed the subject at all; he himself never said. Earlier that night he had stated: "here is the place for you to teach great mysteries to your brethren"; that may

have had something to do with prompting his line of thought; that, and a desire to put an end to the "conflicting views" of the elders. Then too, it should be recalled that the Saints had been in Utah something less than five years. They numbered but a few thousand there; and in that period before the railroad spanned the continent, they enjoyed a rather isolated condition. This tended to draw them together; thus permitting a public exchange of ideas and expressions that many came to consider indiscreet and ill-advised under later circumstances.

The question.--The parentage of Christ is the problem which commanded the attention of President Young. But in his explanation of it, he created a new, and more enduring controversy in regards to Adam's identity. Although we have listed eight questions with which we are concerned in our overall study, there is in reality but one fundamental, all-embracing question in connection with Brigham Young: what did he believe the relationship to be between Adam and God the Father, the Father of all those born upon this earth? This question must not be lost sight of in the mass of material with which we will now deal.

Early Reactions to the Discourse, 1852-56

The Deseret News.--One looks in vain in America for any published reaction to the discourse. This, however, is understandable in view of the times, the isolated condition of the Saints, and the fact that the only newspaper in the territory in 1852 confined its comments on the conference sermons to brief resumes'. Those which were printed, were published

without any editorializing, unless it involved civic matters, on the newspapers part. The particular session of the 1852 conference with which we are concerned was reported as follows:

The elders and brethren assembled in the tabernacle which was completely crowded. After the usual introductory exercises, Pres. Young preached several sermons on various subjects, (the Holy Ghost resting upon him in great power, while he revealed some of the precious things of the kingdom.)¹

The Millennial Star.--In November, 1853, the Millennial Star, organ of the British Mission of the Church, published the full text of Brigham Young's sermon. In doing so, it stated:

Our Father Adam.--The extract from the Journal of Discourses may startle some of our readers, but we would wish them to recollect that in this last dispensation God will send forth, by His servants, things new as well as old, until man is perfected in the truth.²

It may be well to mention here that the accounts of the address in the Journal of Discourses and in the Millennial Star are identical. In December, 1853, an unsigned article³ entitled "Adam, the Father and God of the Human Family" appeared in the Millennial Star giving a lengthy treatment to the subject. It said in part:

The above sentiment appeared in Star No. 48, a little to the surprise of some of its readers; and while the sentiment may have appeared blasphemous to the ignorant, it has no doubt given rise to some serious reflections with the more candid and comprehensive mind....

Then Adam is really God! And why not? If there are Lords many and Gods many, as the Scriptures inform us, why

¹Deseret News, April 17, 1852.

²Latter-day Saints Millennial Star, (Liverpool: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1840--.), XV, 780.

³S. W. Richards was president of the British Mission at the time; he may well have been the unknown author.

should not our Father Adam be one of them? Did he not prove himself as worthy of that high appellation as any other being that ever lived upon the Earth? Certainly he did, so far as history informs us, unless we can except the Son of God.¹

Although the article acknowledges Adam as a god in the patriarchal sense, nowhere does it actually affirm that he is also the spiritual begetter of mankind. The tone and direction of the writing is well expressed in this excerpt:

In the Patriarchal order of government, each and every ruler is independent in his sphere, his rule extending to those below, and not to those above him, in the same order. While the God of unnumbered worlds is acknowledged to be his God and Father, Adam still maintains his exalted position at the head of all those who are saved from among the whole family of man; and he will be God over all those who are made Gods from among men.... As the great Eloheim is supreme and Almighty over all His children and kingdoms, so is Adam as great a ruler, or God, in his sphere, over his children, and the kingdom which they possess. The earth and all things upon it were created for Adam, and it was given to him of his Father to have dominion over it.²

Fear bringeth torment.--Regardless of the connotation put upon Brigham Young's remarks concerning Adam, it is apparent that the doctrine was upsetting the theological equilibrium of some of the membership in England; that it was having a similar effect in America is also true. Under the caption, "Fear Bringeth Torment," the "Star" again made reference to Adam a week after the previous reference was published:

It has been said that Adam is the God and Father of the human family, and persons are perhaps in fear and great trouble of mind, lest they have to acknowledge him as such in some future day. For our part we would much rather acknowledge Adam to be our Father, than hunt for another, and take up with the devil. . . . If these things have power to

¹Millennial Star, op. cit., XV, 801-4.

²Ibid., Infra, p. 76.

disturb the pure mind, we apprehend that even greater troubles than these may arise before mankind learn all the particulars of Christ's incarnation--how and by whom he was begotten; the character of the relationships formed by that act; the number of wives and children he had, and all other circumstances with which he was connected, and by which he was tried and tempted in all things like unto man. Whatever may prove to be the facts in the case, it certainly would exhibit a great degree of weakness on the part of any one to indulge in fears and anxieties about that which he has no power to control. Facts still remain facts, whether kept or revealed.¹

The true meaning of President Young's discourse was an unsettled question; nothing that may be taken as official was forthcoming from one of the general authorities of the Church until some six months later when Franklin D. Richards, a member of the quorum of the twelve apostles, arrived in England to assume leadership of the British Mission.

The London general conference.--In June, 1854, a special conference was held in London attended by most of those involved in the missionary labors of the Church in Great Britain. The primary purpose of the conference was apparently to introduce the new mission president to those with whom he would be working, and to bid the retiring president, S. W. Richards, farewell. In the course of the conference, various missionaries were called upon to report the status of their individual "conference districts." Three of the reports made reference to Adam:

They (the members of his conference district) are lacking faith on one principle--the last "cat that was let out of the bag." Polygamy has been got over pretty well, that cloud has vanished away, but they are troubled about Adam being our Father and God. There is a very intelligent person investigating our principles, and who has been a great help to the Saints; he has all the works, and can get along very well with everything else but the last "cat,"

¹Ibid., (Dec. 17, 1853), pp. 824-26.

and as soon as he can see that clearly, he will become a "Mormon." I instructed him to write to Liverpool upon it.¹

Relative to the principles recently revealed, we have not the slightest difficulty. If Adam's being our Father and God cannot be proved by the Bible, it is all right.²

I believe in the principle of obedience; and if I am told that Adam is our Father and our God, I just believe it.³

In a memorial to S. W. Richards, who had been president of the British Mission from May, 1852 to June, 1854, the missionaries paid him tribute, saying in part:

It has fallen to your lot to preside over the British Saints at a time and under circumstances unparalleled in the history of the work in this country. The introduction of the Law of Celestial Marriage, which, in its operations, will revolutionize all our political, religious, and domestic arrangements; and the announcement of the position which Adam, our great progenitor, occupies among the Gods; have marked your Presidency as a special epoch in the history of the British Mission.⁴

Apostle Franklin D. Richards, who was presiding over this special three day conference, took up the question of Adam before the assembled missionaries. He told them that they should not let the new doctrine trouble them, and he released them from "all obligation to prove this from the old Scriptures, for you cannot, if you try.":

If, as Elder Caffall remarked, there are those who are waiting at the door of the Church for this objection to be removed, tell such, the Prophet and Apostle Brigham has declared it, and that it is the word of the Lord. That is vastly stronger proof than Christendom can give for much that they profess to believe. Tell the Saints that if this

¹Ibid., XVI, 482. Remarks of Elder Thomas Caffall.

²Ibid., p. 483. Remarks of Elder Joseph Hall.

³Ibid., p. 530. Remarks of Elder James A. Little.

⁴Ibid., p. 629.

stone does not seem to fit into the great building of their faith just now, to roll it aside. You can help them to roll it aside out of their way, so that they will not stumble against it while at their daily duties, and it will be but a very short time till they will find a place in their building where no other stone will fit, then it will be on hand all right, and will come into its place in the building without the sound of hammer or chisel.¹

The foregoing comment by Franklin D. Richards indicates his loyalty to President Young, and his acceptance of the doctrine taught by him. But again, in just what sense he accepted or understood the doctrine he does not say. However, the failure on the part of F. D. Richards and the missionaries to qualify their acceptance of Adam as "our Father and God," in some way, is noteworthy.

Less than a year later, the Millennial Star carried an article entitled, "Priesthood from Adam to Joseph." It was unsigned, but since Franklin D. Richards was the editor of the "Star" at the time, it is quite likely that he wrote or at least approved it for publication. It said in part:

If the Lord God has ever withdrawn from Father Adam the authority here bestowed upon him (Genesis 1:28), He has not seen fit to make it known to the world. While there is nothing to refute, the whole tenor of revelation substantiates, the supposition, that Adam has continued to bear rule over the earth, and control the destinies of his never-ending posterity. From the time he received his commission in the Garden of Eden, he has been labouring diligently to fulfill the instructions there given him by The Lord God concerning his dominions, and to bring them under subjection to his will. This will be fully accomplished when every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is the God of the whole earth. Then will the words of the Prophet Brigham, when speaking of Adam, be fully realized--"He is our Father and our God, and the only God with whom WE have to do." Having now observed how Adam the first man became a God, we inquire why may not millions of his children receive the same Godlike knowledge

¹Ibid., (June 28, 1854), pp. 534-5.

and power?

.....

Thus we have a succession of Gods from Adam down to Christ and his Apostles at least. All men being in the image of their father Adam, even as he is in the image of his father, and possessing a similar knowledge of good and evil, when they receive the keys and powers of the same Priesthood, and by their works attain to its blessings, they will, like Adam, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, bear rule and dominion over their own posterity, and have power to redeem, purify, and exalt them, also, to like power and glory.¹

In 1856 there appeared in a Latter-day Saint hymnal, published in England, a new song written by John Jaques, an English convert to the Church. The hymn was entitled, "We Believe In Our God." The first two stanzas are as follows:

We believe in our God, the great Prince of His race,
The Archangel Michael, the Ancient of Days,
Our own Father Adam, earth's Lord, as is plain,
Who'll counsel and fight for his children again.

We believe in His Son, Jesus Christ, who, in love
To his brethren and sisters, came down from above
To die to redeem them from death, and to teach
To mortals and spirits the Gospel we preach.²

It was not included in later editions of the hymnal in England. Nor was the writer able to find it in any hymnal published by the Church in America. Franklin D. Richards must have approved it for publication, since he edited the particular edition in which it is found.

There is a lapse of a number of years between the earliest available reactions to Brigham Young's April, 1852, address and those which next appear. Seemingly, nothing more,

¹Ibid., XVII (March, 1855), 195-96.

²Franklin D. Richards (ed.), Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (11th ed. rev.; Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1856), p. 375 f.

dealing specifically with it, was published until after President Young's death in 1877.

CHAPTER III

THE LATER TEACHINGS OF BRIGHAM YOUNG

As was stated in the introduction, the views of Brigham Young concerning the identity of Adam will be treated almost entirely in the chronological order in which he expressed them.

1852-1859

In discussing the process by which men gain their exaltation, President Young said in part:

But I expect, if I am faithful with yourselves, that I shall see the time with yourselves that we shall know how to prepare to organize an earth like this--know how to people that earth, how to redeem it, how to sanctify it, and how to glorify it, with those who live upon it who hearken to our counsels.

The Father and the Son have attained to this point already; I am on the way, and so are you, and every faithful servant of God.

.

After men have got their exaltation and their crowns--have become Gods, even the sons of God--are made Kings of kings and Lords of lords, they have the power then of propagating their species in spirit; and that is the first of their operations with regard to organizing a world. Power is then given to them to organize the elements, and then commence the organization of tabernacles. How can they do it? Have they to go to that earth? Yes, an Adam will have to go there, and he cannot do without Eve; he must have Eve to commence the work of generation, and they will go into the garden, and continue to eat and drink of the fruits of the corporeal world, until this grosser matter is diffused sufficiently through their celestial bodies to enable them, according to established laws, to produce mortal tabernacles for their spiritual children.

This is a key for you. The faithful will become Gods,

even the sons of God; but this does not overthrow the idea that we have a father. Adam is my father; (this I will explain to you at some future time;) but it does not prove that he is not my father, if I become a god: it does not prove that I have not a father.¹

These remarks, and those made by him in his April address, are quite alike. In April he had stated that Adam and Eve became mortal by partaking of the forbidden fruit "and therefore their offspring were mortal." This parallels the above quote to the effect that those exalted become "an Adam" or "Eve" to a new world whereon they partake of "corporeal" food until "their celestial bodies" can produce "mortal tabernacles for their spiritual children." His qualification that godhood does not obviate the fact that he has a father and that "Adam is my father" bears comparison with his earlier reference to Adam as "our Father and our God." Also of interest is his use of the expression "celestial bodies." He had used the same term in April in stating that Adam and Eve entered the garden with "celestial bodies." Twenty-four years later, in 1876, he is quoted as saying that the "spirits were begotten, born and educated in the celestial world, and were brought forth by celestial bodies."²

In advancing the celestial body concept for Adam and Eve, Brigham Young was obliged to reject the "dust of the earth" account of Adam's creation as given in Genesis. This he did as follows:

You believe Adam was made of the dust of this earth. This

¹Deseret News, Sept. 18, 1852. (same as JD 6:275)

²J. of D., XVIII (Oct., 1876), 258.

I do not believe, though it is supposed that it is so written in the Bible; but it is not, to my understanding. You can write that information to the States, if you please --that I have publicly declared that I do not believe that portion of the Bible as the Christian world do. I never did, and I never want to. What is the reason I do not? Because I have come to understanding, and banished from my mind all the baby stories my mother taught me when I was a child.¹

In describing Adam as the "chief manager" in the creation of this earth he said:

He was the person who brought the animals and the seeds from other planets to this world, and brought a wife with him and stayed here. You may read and believe what you please as to what is found written in the Bible. Adam was made from the dust of an earth, but not from the dust of this earth. He was made as you and I are made, and no person was ever made upon any other principle.²

Apparently President Young means that Adam was provided with a physical body through the normal pattern of conception, embryonic development, and birth, since that is method by which "you and I are made."

God the Father of Our Spirits and Bodies.--This was the caption of one of the most far-reaching sermons in implication ever given by Brigham Young. Speaking of the "Father of our spirits" he says:

He has been earthly, and is of precisely the same species of being that we are. Whether Adam is the personage that we should consider our heavenly Father, or not, is considerable of a mystery to a good many. I do not care for one moment how that is; it is no matter whether we are to consider Him our God, or whether His Father, or His Grandfather,³ for in either case we are one species--of one family--and Jesus Christ is also of our species.

¹Ibid., II (Oct., 1853), 6-7.

²Ibid., III (April, 1856), 319-20. Infra, p. 102.

³Infra, p. 24.

.....

Now to the facts in the case; all the difference between Jesus Christ and any other man that ever lived on the earth, from the days of Adam until now, is simply this, the Father, after He had once been in the flesh, and lived as we live, obtained His exaltation, attained to thrones, gained the ascendancy over principalities and powers, and had the knowledge and power to create--to bring forth and organize the elements upon natural principles. This He did after His ascension, or His glory, or His eternity, and was actually classed with the Gods, with the beings who create, with those who have kept the celestial law while in the flesh, and again obtained their bodies. Then He was prepared to commence the work of creation, as the Scriptures teach--It is all here in the Bible; I am not telling you a word but what is contained in that book.

Things were first created spiritually; the Father actually begat the spirits, and they were brought forth and lived with Him. Then He commenced the work of creating earthly tabernacles, precisely as He had been created in this flesh Himself, by partaking of the course [sic] material that was organized and composed this earth, until His system was charged with it, consequently the tabernacles of His children were organized from the coarse materials of this earth.

When the time came that His first-born, the Saviour, should come into the world and take a tabernacle, the Father came Himself and favoured that spirit with a tabernacle instead of letting any other man do it. The Saviour was begotten by the Father of His Spirit, by the same being who is the Father of our spirits, and that is all the organic difference between Jesus Christ and you and me.

.....

Whether you receive these things or not, I tell you them in simplicity. I lay them before you like a child, because they are perfectly simple. If you see and understand these things, it will be by the Spirit of God; you will receive them by no other spirit, no matter whether they are told to you like the thunderings of the Almighty, or by simple conversation; if you enjoy the Spirit of the Lord, it will tell you whether they are right or not.¹

Heber C. Kimball, a counselor to President Young in the first presidency, made direct reference to the above address the same day it was given:

¹Ibid., IV (Feb., 1857), 216-18.

Brother Brigham has talked here to-day so plain a little child cannot misunderstand it. He spoke about our Father and our God; I believe what he has said; in fact I know it. Often when I have been in the presence of brother Brigham, we would feel such a bouyant spirit that when we began to talk we could not express our feelings, and so, "Hallelujah," says Brigham, "Glory to God," say I. I feel it and I say it.

Some of the brethren kind of turn their noses on one side at me when I make such expressions, but they would not do it if they knew God. Such ones do not even know brothers Brigham and Heber; if they did they would not turn a wry face at us.¹

Heber C. Kimball's remarks are not only indicative of his own views concerning God, but they also reveal something of a division of opinion, or at least of attitude, among the membership. That Brigham Young was also aware of this division will be shown further along in this study.

One month later to the day, President Young remarked: "Suppose that one of us had been Adam, and had peopled and filled the world with our children, they, although they might be great grandchildren & c. still, I say, had I been Adam, they would be my flesh, blood, and bones, and have the same kind of a spirit put into them that is in me."² He then goes on to say that "pertaining to the flesh" they would all be his children and be required to give an account of their lives to him. He repeats the thought that God "has had a body and been on an earth" saying that this would be necessary if God was to "judge men righteously." He suggests that, "If I can pass brother Joseph, I shall stand a good chance of passing Peter, Jesus, the Prophets, Moses, Abraham, and all back to Father Adam, and be pretty sure of receiving his approbation."³

¹Ibid., p. 222. ²Ibid., pp. 271-72. ³Ibid.

A reaffirmation of his belief that Adam was "our God" was expressed by President Young in October of that year:

Some have grumbled because I believe our God so near to us as Father Adam. There are many who know that doctrine to be true. Where was Michael in the creation of this earth? Did he have a mission to the earth? He did. Where was he? In the Grand Council, and performed the mission assigned him there. Now, if it should happen that we have to pay tribute to Father Adam, what a humiliating circumstance it would be! Just wait till you pass Joseph Smith; and after Joseph lets you pass him, you will find Peter; and after you pass the Apostles and many of the Prophets, you will find Abraham, and he will say, "I have the keys, and except you do thus and so, you cannot pass," and after awhile you come to Jesus; and when you at length meet Father Adam, how strange it will appear to your present notions. If we can pass Joseph and have him say, "Here, you have been faithful; good boys; I hold the keys of this dispensation; I will let you pass"; then we shall be very glad to see the white locks of Father Adam. But those are ideas which do not concern us at present, although it is written in the Bible-- "This is eternal life, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."¹

We have already seen that Brigham Young believed that life was "transplanted" to this earth from other worlds and that man was the result of natural procreation. This thought is repeated by him:

Here let me state to all philosophers of every class upon the earth, When [sic] you tell me that father Adam was made as we make adobies from the earth, you tell me what I deem an idle tale. When you tell me that the beasts of the field were produced in that manner, you are speaking idle words devoid of meaning. There is no such thing in all the eternities where the Gods dwell. Mankind are here because they are the offspring of parents who were first brought here from another planet, and power was given them to propagate their species, and they were commanded to multiply and replenish the earth.²

Further along in the course of this same address Brigham Young said: "Adam and Eve are the parents of all pertaining to the flesh and I would not say that they are not also the parents

¹Ibid., V, 331-2. ²Ibid., VII (Oct., 1859), 285-6.

of our spirits."¹

1860-1869

President Young made this remark in addressing some words of consolation to the childless women of the Church:

You will see the time when you will have millions of children around you. If you are faithful to your covenants, you will be mothers of nations. You will become Eves to earths like this; and when you have assisted in peopling one earth, there are millions of earths still in the course of creation.²

If he is using the term "Eve" in the same sense that he used it in his April, 1852, discourse, then these childless women would be resurrected "Eves" when becomming "Eves to earths like this." Therefore, their husbands would be resurrected "Adams" to those "millions of earths." Such an Adam could hardly be mortal; for the "Adam" of this earth fell for precisely the fact that his wife had become mortal, thus necessitating his own "fall."³

President Young made this statement in discussing the dissemination of theological truth:

How has it transpired that theological truth is thus so widely disseminated? It is because God was once known on the earth among his children of mankind, as we know one another.

Adam was as conversant with his Father who placed him upon this earth as we are conversant with our earthly parents. The Father frequently came to visit his son Adam, and talked and walked with him; and the children of Adam were more or less acquainted with their Grandfather, and their children were more or less acquainted with their Great Grandfather; and the things that pertain to God and to heaven were as familiar among mankind, in the first ages of their existence on the earth, as these mountains are to our mountain boys.
...⁴

¹Ibid., p. 290. ²Ibid., VIII (Oct., 1860) 208.

³2 Nephi 2:22-25. ⁴Ibid., IX (Jan., 1862), 148. Supra p. 20.

Here Brigham Young implicitly identifies Adam as the spiritual progenitor of his mortal offspring. More than that, he implies that Adam, like Christ, was spiritually and physically begotten by one Father, one God. For in describing that God as the "Grandfather" and "Great Grandfather" of Adam's children and grandchildren respectively, he must intend a physical relationship between that personage and his son Adam as well.¹ Latter-day Saint doctrine affirms that spirits do not beget offspring; therefore, Adam's Father could not be the spiritual "Great Grandfather" of Adam's progeny; but physically, he would be the "Great Grandfather" of Adam's mortal grandchildren. A purely spiritual interpretation would make the president's use of the terms "Grandfather" and "Great Grandfather" meaningless and misleading. The statement is an apparent allusion to his earlier remark: "Adam and Eve are the parents of all pertaining to the flesh, and I would not say that they are not also the parents of our spirits."

On January 8, 1865, President Young told an audience that should God appear without glory, they would not recognize him from any other man. And yet: "He is the Father of all, is above all, through all, and in you all; He knoweth all things pertaining to this earth, and he knows all things pertaining to millions of earths like this."² Likewise, if Christ should "veil His glory" he would appear as any other man. The President then asked his audience if they would accept Christ should he declare himself to them under those conditions. Continuing

¹Cf. Luke 3:38. ²Deseret News, Feb. 1, 1865, p. 138.

this line of thought Brigham Young again asked:

And if you believed His words, would you not wonder exceedingly to hear that our Father and God is an organized being after the fashion of man's organization in every respect? Such, however, is the case.

One of the prophets describes the Father of us all, saying, "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame," etc. The prophet further says, "thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him," etc. Again "and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him." Now, who is this Ancient of days? You may answer this question at your pleasure, I have already told the people. But the Saviour would answer the question as to the appearance of the Father of us all, by saying, "Look at me, for I am the very express image of my Father."¹

In citing both Daniel's vision of the Ancient of days,² and Jesus' characterization of his Father, as being descriptions of the "Father of us all," no other conclusion seems possible but that President Young has identified the Father and the Ancient of days as one and the same person. There is absolutely nothing in the way of a change in the continuity of thought or of subject matter anywhere in the entire address to give one a valid reason to believe otherwise. In Latter-day Saint theology the Ancient of days and Adam are but two names or titles for the same individual.³ If Brigham Young did not intend for such an identification to be assumed, what possible reason did he have for using a well-known description of Adam, as he is to appear in the latter-days, to describe God the Father? If his actual meaning was devious and complex, the writer is unable to understand

¹Ibid.,

²Daniel 7:9-14

³Joseph Fielding Smith (ed.), Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1946) p. 157

why, at a later point in the same discourse he remarked:

It is as easy to understand these principles when the mind is opened by the Spirit of the Almighty, as it is to understand one of the simple lessons in the child's first reader.

Here are some of the twelve Apostles listening to what I have to say; they have heard me speak at length upon these doctrines, and they have been taught from time to time for years past. The speaker this morning possessed a sweet, loving spirit, and gave us a lovely discourse, but did not think of these things which have been told him time and time again. I would exhort my brethren to read the Scriptures, and seek earnestly for the Spirit of the Almighty to understand them; and this great subject, at which I have merely glanced, will appear to them in all its simplicity and grandeur.¹

Another statement, not unlike the preceeding one, was made by President Young two years later on February 10, 1867, when, in speaking of the final gathering of Israel, he said:

They will come up tribe by tribe, and the Ancient of Days, He who led Abraham, and talked to Noah, Enoch, Isaac, and Jacob, that very Being will come and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. He will say, "You rebelled, and you have been left to the mercies of the wicked."²

Just when the Ancient of days, Adam, is supposed to have "led Abraham, and talked to...Isaac and Jacob" is not revealed by the speaker. There is no scriptural account of Adam having done so at any time. President Young's use of Daniel 7:9-14 as being descriptive of God the Father would provide a solution as to his meaning, since it would establish the Ancient of days, or Adam, as the one who "led Abraham," etc.³

¹J. of D., op. cit., XI, 41-42.

²Ibid., p. 326. 7

³Ibid., XIII, 236. Speaking of the God who told Abraham to offer up Isaac, B. Young said, "Who is that God? He is my Father, He is your Father; we are His offspring."

1870-1876

There are two discourses in this period, both given in 1873, worthy of especial reference. The first of these is undoubtedly one of the most specific, plain spoken sermons on the identity of Adam ever given by President Young. It is the more important because it came in the twilight of his life. Speaking of the reticence of the membership of the Church to accept new truth he said:

How pleased we would be to place these things before the people if they would receive them! How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-Day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed unto them, and which God revealed to me--namely that Adam is our father and God-- I do not know, I do not inquire, I care nothing about it. Our Father Adam helped to make this earth, it was created expressly for him, and after it was made he and his companions came here. He brought one of his wives with him, and she was called Eve, because she was the first woman upon the earth. Our Father Adam is the man who stands at the gate and holds the keys of everlasting life and salvation to all his children who have or whoever will come upon the earth. I have been found fault with by the ministers of religion because I have said that they were ignorant. But I could not find any man on the earth who could tell me this, although it is one of the simplest things in the world, until I met and talked with Joseph Smith.¹

In clarifying certain remarks made by his brother, Joseph Young, the President said:

My brother said that God is as we are. He did not mean those words to be literally understood. He meant simply, that in our organization we have all the properties in embryo in our bodies that our Father has in his, and that literally, morally, socially, by the spirit and by the flesh we are his children. Do you think that God, who holds the eternities in his hands and can do all things at his pleasure, is not capable of sending forth his own children, and forming this flesh for his own offspring? Where is the mystery in this? We say that Father Adam came here and

¹Deseret News, June 18, 1873, p. 308.

helped to make the earth. Who is he? He is Michael, a great Prince, and it was said to him by Elohim, "Go ye and make an earth." What is the great mystery about it? He came and formed the earth. Geologists tell us that it was here millions of years ago. How do they know? They know nothing about it. But suppose it was here, what of it? Adam found it in a state of chaos, unorganized and incomplete.... Adam came here and got it up in shape that would suit him to commence business. What is the great mystery about it? None that I have seen. The mystery in this, as with miracles, or anything else, is only to those who are ignorant. Father Adam came here, and then they brought his wife. "Well," says one, "why was Adam called Adam?" He was the first man on the earth, and its framer and maker. He, with the help of his brethren, brought it into existence. Then he said, "I want my children who are in the spirit world to come and live here. I once dwelt upon an earth something like this, in a mortal state. I was faithful, I received my crown and exaltation. I have the privilege of extending my work, and to its increase there will be no end. I want my children that were born to me in the spirit world to come here and take tabernacles of flesh that their spirits may have a house, a tabernacle or a dwelling place as mine has, and where is the mystery?"

Now for mother Eve. The evil principle always has and always will exist. Well, a certain character came along, and said to Mother Eve, "The Lord has told you that you must not do so and so, for if you do you shall surely die. But I tell you that if you do not do this you will never know good from evil, your eyes will never be opened, and you may live on the earth forever and ever, and you will never know what the Gods know." The devil told the truth, what is the mystery about it? He is doing it today. He is telling one or two truths and mixing them with a thousand errors to get the people to swallow them. I do not blame Mother Eve, I would not have had her miss eating the forbidden fruit for anything in the world. I would not give a goat if I could not understand light from darkness.¹

President Young adds that man must know good and evil as the Gods have learned it, and he speaks of the reluctance of many people to accept the Gospel because of a prejudice which "debars them of that liberty I have in my heart." Of the sources of his knowledge he says:

I do not want to be found fault with, but if I am it is

¹Ibid.

All the same to me. There is no mystery to me in what God has revealed to me, or in what I **have learned**, whether it has been through Joseph, an angel, the voice of the Spirit, the Holy Ghost or the Spirit of the Lord; no matter how I have learned a thing, if I understand it perfectly it is no mystery to me.¹

This address has been quoted at length to establish the complete context of his remarks, and to better reveal the overall pattern of Brigham Young's thinking, not only in relationship to Adam as a god, but also in regards to the fall of Adam from that divine status. In the mind of President Young, there was apparently nothing contradictory nor "mysterious" in his claim that two heavenly beings, endowed with the glory of the Gods, could, under certain circumstances, and for a pre-arranged purpose, assume an inferior, and in the eyes of many, an almost degraded position. It's as though he looked upon them as players in some great, and infinitely vital, stage production. Players who had assumed major "roles" for a time; roles which naturally cloaked their identities, but which in no way altered, or deprived them of those identities. Yet these roles, unlike those assumed in an actual play, were not sheer make-believe; they involved a definite sacrifice, a sacrifice made in behalf of those who had been "born" to Adam and Eve in the "spirit world." For President Young, it was perfectly simple; there was no "mystery" about it.

The second of the two discourses was given about three months later. In it is the suggestion of a plurality of wives for Adam, just as there was in President Young's discourse of April, 1852, in which he spoke of Eve as "one

¹Ibid.

of his wives."¹:

When Father Adam came to assist in organizing the earth out of the crude material that was found, an earth was made upon which the children of men could live. After the earth was prepared Father Adam came and stayed here, and there was a woman brought to him. Now I am telling you something that many of you know, it has been told you, and the brethren and sisters should understand it. There was a certain woman brought to Father Adam whose name was Eve, because she was the first woman, and she was given to him to be his wife; I am not disposed to give any further knowledge concerning her at present. There is no doubt - but that he left many companions. The great and glorious doctrine that pertains to this I have not time to dwell upon; neither should I at present if I had time. He understood this whole machinery or system before he came to this earth; and I hope my brethren and sisters will profit by what I have told them.²

1877

It was in 1877 that President Brigham Young died. Although there is nothing pertinent in his public remarks of that year, there is one noteworthy reference to be found in the private journal of one of the members of the Church living at the time. His name is L. John Nuttall, and his account is in connection with the dedication of the St. George temple, the first temple to be completed by the Church subsequent to the expulsion of the saints from Nauvoo, Illinois in 1846. Nuttall speaks of meeting with President Young and other leaders of the Church in the President's winter home in St. George, Utah. The new temple, and the work performed therein, being uppermost in the minds of the assembled men, President Young narrated certain facts in connection with the introduction of the endowment ordinance by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Brigham

¹Supra, p. 6. ²J. of D., op. cit., XVI (Aug., 1873), 167

Young then went on to say:

In the creation the Gods entered into an agreement about forming this earth-putting Michael or Adam upon it. these (sic) things of which I have been speaking are what are termed the mysteries of godliness but they will enable you to understand the expression of Jesus made while in Jerusalem. This is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. We were once acquainted with the Gods & lived with them but we had the privilege of taking upon us flesh that the spirit might have a house to dwell in. We did so and forgot all and came into the world not recollecting anything of which we had previously learned. We have heard a great deal about Adam and Eve. how (sic) they were formed & some think he was made like an adobie and the Lord breathed into him the breath of life. for we read "from dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return" (sic) Well he was made of the dust of the earth but not of this earth. he was made just the same way you and I are made but on another earth. Adam was an immortal being when he came. on this earth he had lived on an earth similar to ours (sic) he had received the Priesthood and the Keys thereof. and had been faithful in all things and gained his resurrection and his exaltation and was crowned with glory immortality and eternal lives and was numbered with the Gods for such he became through his faithfulness. and he had begotten all the spirits that was (sic) to come to this earth. and Eve our common Mother who is the mother of all living bore those spirits in the celestial world. and when this earth was organized by Elohim. Jehovah (sic) & Michael who is Adam our common Father. (sic) Adam & Eve had the privilege to continue the work of Progression. consequently came to this earth and commenced the great work of forming tabernacles for those spirits to dwell in. and when Adam and those that assisted him had completed this Kingdom our earth he came to it. and slept and forgot all and became like an infant child. it is said by Moses the historian that the Lord caused a deep sleep to come upon Adam and took from his side a rib and formed the woman that Adam called Eve--this should be interpreted that the Man Adam like all other Men had the seed within him to propagate his species. but not the Woman. she conceives the seed but she does not produce it. consequently she was taken from the side or bowels of her father. this explains the mystery of Mose's dark sayings in regard to Adam and Eve. Adam & Eve when placed on this earth were immortal beings with flesh. bones and sinues (sic). but upon partaking of the fruits of the earth while in the garden and cultivating the ground their bodies became changed from immortal to mortal beings with blood coursing through their veins as the action of life. Adam was not under transgression until after he partook of the forbidden fruit this was necessary that they might be together that man might be. the woman

was found in transgression not the Man-- [sic] Now in the law of Sacrifice we have the promise of a Savior and man had the privilege and showed forth his obedience by offering of the first fruits of the earth and the firstlings of the flocks--this as showing that Jesus would come and shed his blood. (Four lines with nothing written on them). Father Adam's oldest son (Jesus the Saviour) who is the heir of the family is Father Adam's first begotten in the spirit World. who [sic] according to the flesh is the only begotten as it is written. In his divinity he having gone back into the spirit World, and come in the spirit to Mary and she conceived for when Adam and Eve got through with their Work in this earth, they did not lay their bodies down in the dust, but returned to the spirit World from whence they came.

I felt myself much blessed in being pereitted [sic] (permitted) to Associate with such men and hear such instructions as they savored of life to me.¹

There is no legitimate reason to question the general accuracy of this account of Brigham Young's remarks as it appears in the Nuttall journal. The journal itself is a small one showing the wear of many years. The failure of Nuttall to properly punctuate, etc., may be due to an understandable haste on his part in making the entry at the time President Young was speaking. Yet, it is quite possible that the entry was made later, possibly from notes. Nuttall's personal comment at the conclusion of the entry seems to support this latter possibility since it appears to be an afterthought, or an impression entered in retrospect. As for Nuttall's integrity, the writer can think of no reasonable motive why he would deliberately write something in his private diary, one that has but recently come to public light, which was untrue! For morally, there doesn't seem to be the slightest blemish on Nuttall's character. He

¹Journal of L. John Nuttall, (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Library, 1948) I (Feb. 7, 1877), 19-21. Typed.

held the offices of bishop, stake president, and temple recorder. He acted as private secretary to President John Taylor (1879-1887) and President Wilford Woodruff (1887-1892). Andrew Jenson, an assistant Church Historian, wrote of him: "Elder Nuttall is one of the busiest men in the Church, and has discharged every duty imposed upon him with that zeal and fidelity which characterizes God's faithful servants."¹ Nuttall also held numerous public offices, including chief clerk of the state legislature, city recorder, etc. He occasionally acted as a clerk in the general conferences of the Church;² and in taking of formal notes was considered "extremely reliable." In fact, he was acting as a special secretary to President Young at the time the journal entry in question was made.

Then too, Nuttall quotes nothing as coming from Brigham Young that is contrary to what he had already publicly said. In comparing the Nuttall entry with the June, 1873, discourse, we are obliged to admit a definite similarity. The private remarks of President Young to other Church authorities, as Nuttall has recorded them, are, to be sure, somewhat in advance, as to particulars, of his public statements, but they are not out of harmony with them.

There is one thought expressed in the Nuttall journal which merits analysis. It is the explanation of how Adam, who in a state of mortality had many direct offspring, could still

¹Andrew Jenson, L. D. S. Biographical Encyclopedia (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Co., 1901), I, 355-58.

²J. of D., op. cit., XXIII, 55.

be the Father of Christ, who is spoken of as the "Only Begotten" Son of God. Brigham Young implies that Christ is the "only begotten" of Adam "in his divinity." In other words, when Adam beget physical offspring, he did so in a fallen state of mortality which precluded the transfer of "divinity" or immortality to that offspring. But in the case of the Savior, such a transfer of divinity could take place because Adam and Eve, without actually suffering a physical death, had "returned to the spirit world from whence they came" and reassumed their former glory and divinity.¹ Thus, Adam, having regained his divinity and immortality, could, in begetting Christ, declare him to be the "Only Begotten Son" of it.

Some two years later, under the dateline of Thursday, March 6, 1879, Nuttall made another reference to Brigham Young's teachings:

Attended fast day Meeting (sic). serveral (sic) spoke and the question as to Adam being our Father & God was presented. I explained this matter as I got it from Prest B (sic) Young and as I understand it--this question has been on the minds of serveral of the brethren since Bro. Wandel Mace spoke on it about a Month (sic) ago and gave a wrong impression (sic) I spoke to correct him & set the people right--which correction he accepted (sic)²

A Few Conclusions

Having come to the end of the less ambiguous statements by Brigham Young concerning Adam, we now turn to the always dangerous, and equally thankless task of summarizing the evidence and drawing a few conclusions. This, before going on to

¹Supra, p. 21. Cf., Genesis 3:22-24.

²Nuttall Journal, op. cit., p. 254. Nuttall was president of the Kanab stake of the Church at the time.

the views of Joseph Smith and other prominent leaders of the Church. At this point we are concerned only with the four basic questions relative to President Young's views.

Were Brigham Young's Remarks Misinterpreted?

The answer to this question would, of course, depend upon what he actually meant to say. Undoubtedly they have been misinterpreted by some persons; the very fact that there exists differences of opinion as to his meaning proves that, for certainly not all of these conflicting interpretations are correct. It is true that the original discourse of April 9, 1852, could be taken in more than one way; and if he had never mentioned the subject again his actual meaning would be a moot point. However, he did mention the subject again, many times. Therefore, the likelihood of misunderstanding him, in view of his subsequent statements through the years, becomes more remote. This is borne out in the comments of others, friends and enemies alike, giving expression to President Young's opinions, as, for instance, Nuttall did. The writer was unable to find any reprimand forthcoming from Brigham Young for ascribing such opinions to himself; the significance of this will be manifest presently.

But perhaps it was not so much a matter of misinterpretation as it was of opposition; sometimes opposition assumes the guise of misunderstanding. The concern expressed by the English missionaries in their special conference of 1853, the reassurances of Franklin D. Richards, and the editorials and articles in the Millennial Star defending the doctrine--all

these indicate the recognition of an opposition of sorts. The members were puzzled, even alarmed by this shocking new concept. It was contrary to much that they had accepted as truth all their lives. And it was for that very reason that F. D. Richards had counseled the missionaries to help the membership "roll it aside" until it could be incorporated into their faith "without the sound of hammer or chisel."

That Brigham Young was aware of a certain amount of opposition to his ideas among the saints in Utah can be seen from such remarks as: "Some have grumbled because I believe our God so near to us as Father Adam."¹ On other occasions he is quoted as saying:

I am hated for teaching the people the way of life and salvation--for teaching them principles that pertain to eternity, by which the Gods were and are, and by which they gain influence and power.²

President Kimball remarked that he had been told that some did not believe all that he said, or all that I say. I care not one groat whether they believe all that I say or not,...if they believe what the Almighty says, [and build up the kingdom] that will content me....³

How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-Day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed unto them, and which God revealed to me--namely that Adam is our father and God--I do not know, I do not inquire, I care nothing about it.⁴

Like Brigham Young, we "do not know" how much opposition his views met with indirectly or otherwise. Being president of the Church, it is doubtful that he had much, if any,

¹J. of D., V (Oct., 1857) 331.

²Ibid., VII (July, 1859), 3. ³Ibid., X, 302.

⁴Desseret News, June 18, 1873, p. 308. Supra, p. 28.

given him publicly by the members themselves; nor would there be much likelihood of negative expressions finding their way into any of the Church publications. To be sure there was opposition to President Young and the Church as such by non-Mormons and bitter apostates; but this was of a rather general nature--an opposition to everything "Mormon."

However, according to T. B. H. Stenhouse¹ in his book, The Rocky Mountain Saints, there was one man who did publicly oppose Brigham Young in his views. That man was Orson Pratt, one of the more brilliant and erudite members of the quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Of him Stenhouse writes: "The mass of the Mormon people do not believe in the Adam-deity, but of them all, one only, Orson Pratt, has dared to make public protest against that doctrine."² Stenhouse goes on to say:

Orson Pratt, for presuming to teach a deity contrary to Brigham's Adam, was for years upon the point of being severed from the Church; at last, ten years ago, he was tried for rebellion. On that occasion--the Author well remembers it--Orson Pratt showed a manliness and Christian determination to cling to the truth, that earned for him the admiration of every soul that dared to think and love the God-given liberty of an untrammelled mind.... As the apostle stood in Brigham's little office, surrounded by the other apostles of his quorum, not a voice was heard in his support, not a word was whispered either to encourage him or relieve his racked and harrowed soul as he keenly realized the fact that he risked his apostleship and fellowship with the Church.

When he had expressed his thorough comprehension of the responsibility of his position, he told, in words of unmis-

¹Stenhouse became involved with the apostate "Godbeite" movement of 1868 and was excommunicated from the Church in the latter part of 1869. Both before and after his excommunication, he was a bitter enemy of B. Young. B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), V, 259-268.

²T. B. H. Stenhouse, The Rocky Mountain Saints (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1873), p. 492.

takable earnestness, that when the teachings of the Bible, together with the revelations of the Prophet Joseph, came into collision with the teachings of Brigham Young, it was the decision of his soul that, whatever the cost might be, he "would cling to the former."¹

In reply to this President Young is supposed to have "branded him with natural stubbornness and told him that he had always been ungovernable, and had given trouble to Joseph in his day." Finally, some thirty-six hours later, Pratt, to protect his family, and to avoid the stigma of an apostate, publicly confessed his error in opposing Brigham Young. Stenhouse adds:

Orson's submission was painful to his friends, but the thoughtful hoped for the growth and development of his soul outside the iron cast of infallible priesthood. From the hour of that trial he was silently accounted an "Apostate," and for years there was considered to be no temerity in "digging" at him from the pulpit. He was sent to Europe on mission, and treated with marked neglect by the ruling authorities--men far beneath him in moral and intellectual qualities. He bore it all in silence, and returned to Utah determined to stand by his convictions of truth against the Adam deity. His associate apostles tried to shake him out of their Quorum, and in their councils they did everything to bring his "stubbornness" to the point of disfellowship. After two weeks of nightly councils--while Brigham and his twelve were journeying through the northern settlements in 1868--the point was reached. Orson would not, however, recant, even before the threat of disfellowship, but Brigham, at the last moment, entered the council, and arrested the final action. Brigham needs Orson's sermons on the Book of Mormon, Polygamy, and the prophecies, and he fears his influence with the people.²

The writer has been unable to verify the Stenhouse account to any appreciable degree, especially in the particulars which are probably very much colored by the prejudices of Stenhouse himself. And in view of the fact that Stenhouse had been excommunicated from the Church some four years prior to the publish-

¹Ibid., pp. 492-93.

²Ibid., pp. 493-94.

ing of The Rocky Mountain Saints, and that he was an open and admitted enemy of Brigham Young, his narrative must be viewed with dubiety.

In his thesis, "Orson Pratt, Early Mormon Leader," T. Edgar Lyon expresses the opinion that the "Adam-God" theory of Brigham Young probably played but a minor part in the controversy cited by Stenhouse:

Pratt's stand was robbing the supreme God, not Adam, of Glory and Omnipotence. Most of the parts which he was persuaded to repudiate have not any bearing whatever upon God, but deal with pre-existence doctrines of men, plants and animals.¹

His point is well taken; and in view of his more detailed study of Orson Pratt's life and teachings, the writer is inclined to accept it. Still, there were some views of Orson Pratt which, to be maintained, necessitated the rejection of Brigham Young's explanation of the pre-existent character of Adam, and the manner of origination of his physical body. This will be shown hereafter.

The Stenhouse reference to an interview between Orson Pratt and Brigham Young in the latter's "little office" is apparently based on fact. According to S. W. Richards, former president of the British Mission, such a meeting did take place on at least one occasion. However, the Richard's statement gives the year as 1856, and not 1863 as Stenhouse indicates. Possibly more than one such meeting took place; in which event there is no real conflict between the two accounts. In the

¹T. Edgar Lyon, Orson Pratt, Early Mormon Leader (Unpublished Master's thesis, Dept. of Church History, University of Chicago, 1932), p. 92.

diary of Samuel Whitney Richards we read:

Tues. March 11, 1856

Evening with the Regency in the Upper Room of the President's Office, examining [sic] the spelling for the New Books in the D. Alphabet. A very serious conversation took place between Prest. B. Young and Orson Pratt upon doctrine. O. P. was directly opposed to the Prest views and very freely expressed his entire disbelief in them after being told by the President that things were so and so in the name of the Lord. He was firm in the Position that the Prest's word in the name of the Lord, was not the word of the Lord to him. The Prest did not believe that Orson would ever be Adam, to learn by experience the facts discussed, but every other person in the room would if they lived faithful. J. M. Grant, Amasa Lyman, W. Woodruff, Albert Carrington, Elias Smith, & Robt L. Campbell were present.¹

The context of the above entry gives us good reason to believe that doctrine in some way concerning Adam was the cause of the disagreement between President Young and Orson Pratt. The president's remark that he did not believe "that Orson would ever be "Adam," obviously "an Adam," would indicate this.

President Young's public comments on the views of Pratt would indicate that more than one "very serious conversation" was held between the two men. In 1857, Brigham Young denounced the view of "our philosopher brother" to the effect that God's "fountain of spirit" fills universal space, and that "every particle of it is a Holy Spirit, and that that Spirit is all powerful and all wise, full of intelligence and possessing all the attributes of all the Gods in eternity!"² President Young added that Orson Hyde had advanced much the same theory to Joseph Smith and that the Prophet

¹Diary of Samuel Whitney Richards 1824-1909, (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Library, 1946), p. 15. Typed.

²J. of D., op. cit., IV (Mar., 1857), 266-67.

had told him: "it is not true." The president then went on to reprimand the absent Pratt rather severely:

With all the knowledge and wisdom that are combined in the person of brother Orson Pratt, still he does not yet know enough to keep his foot out of it, but drowns himself in his own philosophy, everytime that he undertakes to treat upon the principles that he does not understand. When he was about to leave here for his present mission [Pratt had been sent to Washington D. C. to publish The Seer], he made a solemn promise that he would not meddle with principles which he did not fully understand, but would confine himself to the first principles of the doctrine of salvation, such as were preached by brother Joseph Smith and the Apostles. But the first thing that we see in his writings, he is dabbling with things that he does not understand; his vain philosophy is no criterion or guide for the Saints in doctrine.¹

In this same discourse, President Young spoke of the future time when the Saints would "have the privilege of commencing the work that Adam commenced on this earth" and of being "an Adam on earth."

In 1860, Orson Pratt did make a public recantation of certain of his views. This quote is from an account revised by him, and the "council":

At the time I expressed these views, I did most sincerely believe that they were in accordance with the word of God. I did most sincerely suppose that I was justifying the truth. But I have since learned from my brethren, that some of the doctrines I had advanced in the "Seer," at Washington were incorrect. Naturally being of a stubborn disposition and having a kind of self will about me; and moreover supposing really and sincerely that I did understand what true doctrine was in relation to those points, I did not feel to yield to the judgment of my brethren, but believed they were in error.²

He further says that none have the right to go contrary to the views of the "living oracles," and that God requires the Saints

¹Ibid. Jof D 4:266-67 271

²Deseret News, July 25, 1860.

to sustain all of the authorities in their various callings. Pratt's closing thought reveals something of the tremendous effort his renunciation had required:

I do not know that I shall be able to carry out these views; but these are my present determinations. I pray that I may have the grace and strength to perform this. I feel exceedingly weak in regard to these matters.¹

Under the published account of Orson Pratt's recantation is a statement by the First Presidency in which they cite some of Pratt's ideas considered by them to be false or questionable. Among those delineated we find:

With regard to the quotations and comments in the Seer as to Adam's having been formed "out of the ground," and "from the dust of the ground," & c., it is deemed wisest to let that subject remain without further explanation at present, for it is written that we are to receive "line upon line," according to our faith and capacities, and the circumstances attending our progress.²

Why the First Presidency made the above statement appears obvious in the light of President Young's belief that God "created man, as we create our children; for there is no other process of creation in heaven, on the earth, in the earth, or under the earth, or in all the eternities, that is, that were, or that ever will be."³

Five years later, Orson Pratt was again under fire from the president of the Church:

We have persons in this Church who have preached and published doctrines on the subject of Deity which are not true. Elder Orson Pratt has written extensively on the doctrines of this church, and upon this particular doctrine. When he writes and speaks upon subjects with which he is acquainted and understands, he is a very sound reasoner; but when he

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³J. of D., XI (June, 1865), 122. Supra p. 23

has written upon matters of which he knows nothing--his own philosophy, which I call vain philosophy--he is wild, uncertain and contradictory. In all my public ministration as a minister of truth, I have never yet been under the necessity of preaching, believing or practicing doctrines that are not fully and clearly set forth in the Old and New Testaments, Book of Doctrine and Covenants and the Book of Mormon.¹

The same issue of the Deseret News from which the above quotation was taken also carried a lengthy statement, signed by the First Presidency and the quorum of the twelve apostles, reproving Orson Pratt for, among other things, publishing a book, Joseph Smith the Prophet, in England. They declared it to be full of errors, saying that Pratt had not informed them of his intentions before publishing it. They then quoted from various other writings of Pratt branding them undoctrinal. Among the many things which they said, we find this:

We do not wish incorrect and unsound doctrines to be handed down to posterity under the sanction of great names, to be received and valued by future generations as authentic and reliable, creating labor and difficulties for our successors to perform and contend with, which we ought not to transmit to them. The interests of posterity are, to a certain extent, in our hands. Errors in history and in doctrine, if left uncorrected by us who are conversant with the events, and who are in a position to judge of the truth or falsity of the doctrines, would go to our children as though we had sanctioned and endorsed them. Such a construction could very easily be put upon our silence respecting them, and would tend to perplex and mislead posterity, and make the labor of correction an exceedingly difficult one for them. We know what sanctity there is always attached to the writings of men who have passed away, especially to the writings of Apostles, when none of their contemporaries are left, and we, therefore, feel the necessity of being watchful upon these points. Personal feelings and friendships and associations ought to sink into comparative insignificance, and have no weight in view of consequences so momentous to the people and kingdom of God as these.²

¹Deseret News, August 23, 1865, p. 370.

²Ibid.

The article requoted the statement of the First Presidency in regards to Adam being made of "the dust of the earth" exactly as it had appeared in the Deseret News five years previously.¹ The Seer, the "Great First Cause," and certain articles by Orson Pratt on the Holy Spirit were disowned by the Church. All doctrinal ideas were to be submitted to the First Presidency before being published, or the loss of Priesthood might possibly follow; for only one man was authorized to receive revelation for the Church--Brigham Young. Orson Pratt accepted the decision of the authorities and asked the people to destroy his questionable writings as suggested by the First Presidency.²

Was Brigham Young Misquoted?

It is the writer's opinion that the answer to this question is a categorical no. There is not the slightest evidence from Brigham Young, or any other source, that either his original remarks on April 9, 1852, or any of his subsequent statements were ever misquoted in the official publications of the Church.

The Orson Pratt affair makes it eminently clear that President Young was very much concerned that nothing which he considered to be incorrect doctrine should be promulgated by any of the Church authorities. Nor was Orson Pratt the only one whose "errors" were attacked; there were others also:

We have foolish Elders, and I have had to contend, time after time, against their foolish doctrines. One of our

¹Supra, p. 43.

²Millennial Star, op. cit., XXVII (Nov., 1865), 698.

most intelligent Apostles in one of his discourses left the people entirely in the dark with regard to Jacob and Esau, and he never understood the difference between fore-knowledge and fore-ordination. Fore-knowledge and fore-ordination are two distinct principles. And again, I have had to contend against what is called the "baby resurrection" doctrine, which, as has been taught and indulged by some, is one of the most absurd doctrines that can be thought of. Having had these foolish doctrines to combat, I am not willing that the idea should possess your minds that the body is neither here nor there, and that the work of salvation is entirely spiritual.¹

In the light of Brigham Young's attitude toward the errors of others, and in view of the division created by his remarks concerning Adam, it would be stretching one's credulity to the breaking point to believe that he would have remained silent had he been misquoted. To the contrary, we could expect him to be rather watchful of the manner in which his addresses were published in the official organs of the Church. That he was, may be gleaned from these comments by him concerning his discourses:

I say now, when they are copied and approved by me they are as good Scripture as is couched in this Bible, and if you want to read revelation, read the sayings of him who knows the mind of God, without any special command to one man to go here, and to another to go yonder, or to do this or that, or to go and settle here or there.²

I have never yet preached a sermon and sent it out to the children of men, that they may not call it scripture. Let me have the privilege of correcting a sermon, and it is as good as they deserve. The people have the oracles of God continually.... Let this go to the people with "Thus saith the Lord", and if they do not obey it, you will see the chastening hand of the Lord upon them.³

President Young did not hesitate to cite what he considered to be the false ideas of Orson Pratt by chapter and

¹J. of D., op. cit., IX, 286.

²Ibid., XIII, 264. ³Deseret News, Feb. 2, 1870.

verse; had erroneous teachings concerning Adam been advanced due to the misquoting of his addresses, Brigham Young would surely have referred to those misquotations at sometime or other--he never did. The attitude of the president and his associates concerning doctrinal errors has been previously quoted.¹

Briefly, they affirmed that they "did not wish incorrect and unsound doctrines to be handed down to posterity under the sanction of great names.... Errors in history and in doctrine, if left uncorrected by us...would go to our children as though we had sanctioned and endorsed them. Such a construction could very easily be put upon our silence respecting them...we, therefore, feel the necessity of being watchful upon these points." The complete absence of any real evidence to the contrary obliges the writer to conclude that Brigham Young has not been misquoted in the official publications of the Church.

What Was the Source of Brigham Young's Views?

The two quotations on page forty-six, along with others, make it evident from his own remarks that President Young sincerely believed that he was receiving revelation for the Church:

If we do not speak to you by the Spirit of revelation and the power of God, we do not magnify our calling. I think that I tell you the words of the Lord Almighty everytime I rise here to speak to you. I may blunder in the use of the English language; but suppose I should use language that would grate on the ears of some of the learned, what of that? God can understand it, and so could you, if you had the Spirit of the Lord.... If I do not speak here by the power of God, if it is not revelation to you everytime I speak to you here, I do not magnify my calling.²

¹Supra, p. 45.

²J. of D., op. cit., IX, 140-41.

I wish to ask you a question: Do this people know whether they have received any revelation since the death of Joseph, as a people? I can tell you that you receive them continually.

.....

If it was necessary to write them, we would write all the time. We would rather the people, however, would live so as to have revelations for themselves, and then do the work we are called to do: that is enough for us. Can any of you think of any revelations you have received that are not written? You can.¹

It has been observed that the people want revelation. This is a revelation; and were it written, it would then be a written revelation, as truly as the revelations which are contained in the book of Doctrine and Covenants. I ~~could~~ give you a revelation upon the subject of paying your tithing and building a temple to the name of the Lord; for the light is in me.²

In a sense, there were two sources for the revelations which Brigham Young claimed to receive; one of these was the Prophet Joseph Smith, the martyred first president of the Church. The year Brigham Young died he said:

From the first time I saw the Prophet Joseph I never lost a word that came from him concerning the kingdom. And this is the key of knowledge that I have to-day, that I did hearken to the words of Joseph, and treasured them up in my heart, laid them away, asking my Father in the name of his Son Jesus to bring them to my mind when needed. I treasured up the things of God, and this is the key that I hold to-day. I was anxious to learn from Joseph and the spirit of God.³

On the same occasion he said that he had taught many things not found in any of the standard works of the Church but that when he had spoken "by the power of God and the Holy Ghost, it is truth, it is scripture, and I have no fears but that it will

¹Ibid., VI, 260-82.

²John A. Widtsoe (ed.), Discourses of Brigham Young (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1946), p. 39.

³Deseret News, June 6, 1877, p. 274.

agree with all that has been revealed in every particular." [✓]
 Twenty years earlier, President Young told an audience: "What I have received from the Lord, I have received by Joseph Smith: he was the instrument made use of. If I drop him, I must drop these principles: they have not been revealed, declared, or explained by any other man since the days of the Apostles."¹

The second source of Brigham Young's revelations is, of course, God himself. That is likewise manifest in the foregoing quotations from his addresses. In so far as the source of his views on Adam are concerned, it might be argued that these also came from the same two sources: Joseph Smith, and God. At least it was to these sources that Brigham Young ascribed his knowledge of the subject. And that he felt that he had revealed more than had previously been known, information that went beyond what was then understood regarding Adam, can also be gathered from various statements on his part of which the following is an example:

And I will say, as I have said before, if guilt before my God and my brethren rests upon me in the least, it is in this one thing, that I have revealed too much concerning God and his kingdom, and the designs of our Father in heaven. If my skirts are stained in the least with wrong, it is because I have been too free in telling who God is, how he lives, the nature of his providences and designs in creating the world, in bringing the human family on the earth, his designs concerning them, etc. If I had, like Paul, said--"But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant," perhaps it would have been better for the people.²

In spite of the above sentiment by him in 1860, he continued to discuss "who God is" from time to time for the rest of his life.

¹J. of D., op. cit., VI, 279. The "principles" to which he referred are those involved in the doctrine of eternal marriage.

²Deseret News, June 27, 1860.

Perhaps the one best statement by Brigham Young indicating the dual source of his views was made by him in 1873. It has been previously quoted at length in this thesis.¹ In it he says: "How much unbelief exists in the minds of the Latter-Day Saints in regard to one particular doctrine which I revealed unto them and which God revealed to me--namely that Adam is our father and God--I do not know, I do not inquire, I care nothing about it." He goes on to speak of Adam coming to this earth with "one of his wives" and of Adam's pre-eminence over his children, etc., after which he says: "I could not find any man on the earth who could tell me this, although it is one of the simplest things in the world, until I met and talked with Joseph Smith." It is doubtful if we could prove objectively and conclusively, to the satisfaction of all, where Brigham Young obtained his views regarding Adam. T. B. H. Stenhouse said that he got them from Heber C. Kimball, an extremely questionable, and in some respects, even ludicrous suggestion. Others have offered other possibilities, equally lacking verification. The writer does not pretend to know. All that can be said is that Brigham Young claims Joseph Smith and God, as his revelators. If one is inclined to accept the word of President Young, then the problem is solved. If, on the other hand, one is inclined to doubt his claims, a search for an answer to the problem must be made elsewhere. The results will probably be disappointing.

¹Supra, p. 28.

What Did Brigham Young Believe?

Before summarizing the beliefs of Brigham Young, as the writer sees them, it will be well to cover a few preliminary, but important details. First, it should be recognized that the innermost workings of a man's mind are, to a degree, sacro sanct; being so, they are largely hidden from the probing eyes (and theses) of others unless the man himself chooses to reveal them. Because of this, we must assume, though sometimes erroneously, that a man believes what he most clearly and most often says. The writer has done this in the case of Brigham Young. Not because it is the simplest way to handle the matter, but because the writer believes that it is the only way to do so. To attempt to deal with President Young's statements subjectively, using a certain amount of long-distance psychoanalysis in an effort to discover what he really meant to say, would not only be foolhardy for one who is sometimes none too certain what he himself means to say, but would be a violation of the accepted procedures involved in a study of this kind. The more subjective one becomes, or the more subjective the material one is dealing with, the more precarious and indefensible are the conclusions arrived at. The writer has attempted to be as objective as possible.

In an effort to gain the immediate proximity of the truth, certain arbitrary rules of procedure were set up to guide the writing of this thesis.¹ They should be referred

¹Supra, p. 3.

to again at this time, since the conclusions arrived at by the writer are based upon their application.

In the introduction, the writer said that he had attempted to select that material which was the most pertinent and the least ambiguous, this has been done. However, it may be argued that many so-called "ambiguous statements" are not as ambiguous as the writer has claimed; and that, consequently, ^{prob.} only one side of the story has been told. Therefore, it is deemed proper to quote a few representative remarks by Brigham Young illustrative of the ambiguity which has made their value, in so far as this study is concerned, debatable. For example: "we should do all we can to reclaim the lost sons and daughters of Adam and Eve, and bring them back to be saved in the presence of our Father and God."¹ So far as identities are concerned, the statement reveals nothing conclusively. Another example:

Do you not all know that you are the sons and daughters of the Almighty? If you do not I will inform you this morning that there is not a man or woman on the earth that is not a son or daughter of Adam and Eve. We all belong to the races which have sprung from father Adam and mother Eve; and every son and daughter of Adam and Eve is a son and daughter of that God we serve, who organized this earth and millions of others, and who holds them in existence by law.²

Brigham Young does not actually say that Adam and the "Almighty" are one and the same, but neither does he say they are not; we are left in doubt. The following is an example of many of Brigham Young's statements which tell us what God did, but not who he is:

¹J. of D., op. cit., VIII, 175

²Ibid., XIV, 111.

He is our Father; He is our God, the Father of our spirits; He is the framer of our bodies, and set the machine in successful operation to bring forth these tabernacles....¹

In what sense is God 'the framer of our bodies'? How did He 'set the machine in successful operation'? Herewith is an example of the type of statement which can lead to fruitless controversy over the meaning of terms.

God notices this world. He organized it, and brought forth the inhabitants upon it. We are his children, literally, spiritually, naturally, and in every respect.²

What does he mean by "literally, spiritually, naturally"? The failure to relate them to something more concrete leaves them open to as many definitions as there are people to define them.

Another confusing practice sometimes indulged in by Brigham Young and others is that of using names and titles in a rather loose fashion, as in this quotation: "We obey the Lord, Him who is called Jehovah, the Great I Am, I am a man of war, Eloheim, etc. We are under many obligations to obey Him."³ And again: "He is the Father, God, Savior, Maker, Preserver, and Redeemer of man."⁴ Both statements refer to God the Father, as the overall context of the sermon shows, and yet if taken literally, they might be interpreted as speaking of Christ; since such titles as Jehova, Savior, Redeemer, I Am, etc., are usually associated with him in Latter-day Saint writings. The writer feels that this seemingly indiscriminate use of the names, titles, and epithets ascribed to various divine beings

¹Ibid., XIII, 250.

²Ibid., XIV, 136.

³Ibid., XII, 99.

⁴Ibid., III, 259-60.

is a major cause of the differences of opinion as to Brigham Young's true beliefs concerning Adam. President Young always makes it clear that he is speaking of God as such; but we do not always know with certainty which particular God, if any, he has in mind; hence, the confusion over identities. For unless a definite distinction is made between what may be termed the principle of Godhood (which seemingly includes not only the laws and powers by which godhood is gained and maintained, but also the aggregate of those individuals abiding that principle) and the particular being who has become associated with that principle through the acquisition of Godhood, the identification of any given personality becomes virtually impossible. A differentiation between one particular God, and all the other Gods who combine with him to make up the "one God" in principle, is essential.

There are many instances where Brigham Young speaks of Adam on the one hand, and God on the other; as, for instance, when he said: "We believe that he made Adam after his own image and likeness, as Moses testifies....our God possesses a body and parts, and was heard by Adam and Eve 'walking in the garden in the cool of the day.'"¹ And:

The world may in vain ask the question, "Who are we?" But the Gospel tells us that we are the sons and daughters of that God whom we serve. Some say, "We are the children of Adam and Eve." So we are, and they are the children of our Heavenly Father. We are all the children of Adam and Eve, and they and we are the offspring of Him who dwells in the heavens, the highest Intelligence that dwells anywhere that we have knowledge of.²

¹Ibid., X, 231.

²Ibid., XIII, 311.

These quotations bring us to grips with the apparent contradiction in his statements; for how can he claim that Adam is "our Father and our God, and the only God with whom WE have to do" at one time, and yet assert that Adam and Eve heard "our God" walking in the garden, and that they are the "children of our Heavenly Father," at other times? We must either assume that he has contradicted himself, or that he has not. If he has, then one or the other, if not both, of his statements must be discarded as being false. If, however, he has not contradicted himself, then we are faced with the task of harmonizing seemingly opposing views. Basing the decision on an application of the rules of procedure previously set up, the writer has accepted the second hypothesis as being the more likely--the contradiction is more apparent than real. The general pattern of Brigham Young's views on the status of the Gods, and the future divinity possible to man, as related to the general concept of Latter-day Saint cosmology, seems to support this decision.

Brigham Young, like the church today, was polytheistic in his beliefs. He recognized not only three Gods pertaining to this earth¹--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost--but an endless line of Gods pertaining to other worlds and universes as well:

Refuse evil, choose good, hate iniquity, love truth. All this our fathers have done before us; I do not particularly mean father Adam, or his father; I do not particularly mean Abraham, or Moses, the prophets, or apostles, but I mean our fathers who have been exalted for millions of years previous to Adam's time. They have all

¹ Supra, p. 6.

passed through the same ordeals we are now passing through, and have searched all things, even to the depths of hell.¹

He also believed that these Gods were of one patriarchal lineage, or "species", as he expresses it here: "Whether Adam is the personage that we should consider our heavenly Father, or not, is considerable of a mystery to a good many. I do not care for one moment how that is; it is no matter whether we are to consider Him our God, or whether His Father, or His Grandfather, for in either case we are one species--of one family--and Jesus Christ is also of our species."² Thus Brigham Young implies that to recognize one, is to recognize all; but even so, he makes it clear in other statements that there is but "one God to us,"³ and he is "our Father who made us; for he is the only wise God, and to him we owe allegiance; to him we owe our lives. He has brought us forth and taught us all we know. We are not indebted to any other power or God for all our great blessings."⁴

An article in the Millennial Star, probably written by S. W. Richards, the British Mission president at the time, gives a rather lucid picture of the relationship of the gods to one another and to their own offspring⁵; it merits comparison with these statements by Brigham Young on the same topic:

Then will they become gods, even the sons of God; then will they become eternal fathers, eternal mothers, eternal sons and eternal daughters; being eternal in their organization, they go from glory to glory, from power to

¹Deseret News, May 14, 1862, p. 361.

²J. of D., op. cit., IV, 217

³Ibid., XI, 122

⁴Deseret News, Oct. 26, 1859.

⁵Supra, p. 12.

power; they will never cease to increase and to multiply worlds without end. When they receive their crowns, their dominions, they then will be prepared to frame earths like unto ours and to people them in the same manner as we have been brought forth by our parents, by our Father and God.¹

The kingdoms he possesses and rules over are his own progeny. Every man who is faithful and gets a salvation and glory, and becomes a King of kings and Lord of lords, or a Father of fathers, it will be by the increase of his own progeny. Our Father and God rules over his own children. Wherever there is a God in all the eternities possessing a kingdom and glory and power it is by means of his own progeny.²

These statements should also be compared with Brigham Young's concept of the modus operandi of godhood as expressed by him and quoted on page eighteen.

Therefore, when Brigham Young says that both Adam and Eve, and all the rest of mankind, are the children of the "highest Intelligence that dwells anywhere that we have knowledge of," it is the writer's opinion that he is speaking in terms of an ultimate God, or an ultimate source, to which "our fathers who have been exalted for millions of years" owe their rule and existence; and by which the present race of man on this earth has also come into being as children--by virtue of the patriarchal relationship of the "species"--of that "highest Intelligence."⁴ Again, this differentiation between the principle of godhood and the individual personages comprising and subscribing to that principle will, the writer feels, resolve the seeming conflict in President Young's pronouncements

¹Deseret News, Nov. 8, 1876, p. 642.

²Widtsoe, op., cit., p. 25.

³Cf. Doctrine & Covenants 76:22-24. ⁴Infra, p. 102. The Prophet Joseph Smith also speaks of such an endless order of Gods.

concerning Adam.

A careful, detached study of his available statements, as found in the official publications of the Church, will admit of no other conclusion than that the identification of Adam with God the Father by President Brigham Young is an irrefutable fact. While there are a great many of his expressions which may appear to contradict this, they fail to reveal his views on this particular subject with the clarity, objectivity, and absence of equivocation which would permit them equal weight with his other pronouncements. At best, it may be said that they becloud his more direct statements; but in all honesty, it must be admitted that they fail to actually deny them. We cannot ignore or subvert those of his ideas which were expressed in undeniably specific terms, in order to justify and sustain uncertain interpretations of his intent in general ones. The evidence upon which the writer has based his conclusions is twofold: external and internal. This division is for convenience in presenting the material, and is admittedly an arbitrary one.

External evidences.--

1. The complete absence of denials, retractions, or corrected versions by Brigham Young of the April 9, 1852, address, as well as of his subsequent discourses on the subject, in the light of his expressed attitude toward the dissemination of incorrect doctrine.
2. The absence of evidence, from Brigham Young or any other source, to support the possibility of his having been misquoted in the official Church organs.
3. The absence of any statement on the part of Brigham Young suggesting that he had been misunderstood in his views, in light of his remarks to the effect that he had been doubted and disbelieved in them. *

4. President Young's specific statements which he apparently intended to be taken literally, since he failed to modify them, or to indicate that they should be understood any other way.
5. The statements of others, both before and after his death, indicating that he was taken literally by friends and enemies alike.
6. The consistent pattern of his views, not only in regards to Adam, but in the acquisition and nature of godhood in general.

The internal evidence deals exclusively with the comments of Brigham Young relative to Adam and man's ultimate possible destiny. In indicating what he felt Adam did, President Young revealed whom he thought Adam was; the activities of Adam and the identity of Adam being inseparably connected. A comparison of the April 9, 1852, sermon, or its summation on page eight, with the following summation of Brigham Young's major ideas as expressed in subsequent discourses is invited.¹

Internal evidences.--

1. After the faithful have become gods, they will prepare both spiritual and physical bodies for their offspring; the latter being done by having them go to an earth and eat of "corporeal" food until it is "diffused sufficiently through their celestial bodies to enable them...to produce mortal tabernacles for their spiritual children."²
2. God the Father, after gaining his godhood and begetting his spiritual children, "commenced the work of creating earthly tabernacles..." by partaking of the earth's coarse material "until his system was charged with it;" thus His children's physical bodies were made of the earth's materials.³
3. Adam was a resurrected man who had obtained his exaltation, and who desired that those "children that were

¹Because of its private nature, which leaves it open to question, the Nuttall Journal account has been disregarded.

²Supra, p. 18.

³Supra, p. 21.

born to me in the spirit world" should have the opportunity to obtain physical bodies.¹

4. Brigham Young's use of Daniel's description of the Ancient of days to describe "the Father of us all."²
5. Brigham Young's statement to the effect that "Some have grumbled because I believe our God to be so near to us as Father Adam."³
6. Adam was born as any other person is born, but on another world.⁴
7. Eve was one of Adam's wives.⁵
8. Brigham Young's claim that God had revealed to him that "Adam is our father and God."⁶

¹Supra, p. 29.

²Supra, pp. 26, 27.

³Supra, p. 23.

⁴Supra, pp. 19, 20, 23, 43.

⁵Supra, pp. 6, 28, 31.

⁶Supra, p. 28.

CHAPTER IV

THE VIEWS OF OTHERS

With the passing of Brigham Young, the subject of Adam's identity, beyond that revealed in the standard works of the church, was seldom discussed. To be sure, there were some who commented upon it; but for the most part their remarks tended to skirt the matter, only indirectly supporting or challenging the views of President Young. Indeed, it had been much the same before his death with both his opponents and supporters largely remaining silent, at least publicly. So silent were they, that with the exception of Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, and a few others among the authorities, we are uncertain of their true convictions. However, with the turn of the century, the Church came under fire from various protestant ministers and "Mormon haters" for, among other things, its belief in the "Adam deity" of Brigham Young. It is then that we find such leaders as Charles W. Penrose speaking forth in defense of the official doctrine of the Church. With this much said, the views of others, who spoke with sufficient directness pro and con, will be considered. Again, as in the case of Brigham Young, effort has been made to avoid the use of debatable and inconclusive material.

1852-1899

Heber C. Kimball.--Heber C. Kimball was a counselor to Brigham Young in the First Presidency and seems to have been very close to him, both in spirit and viewpoint.¹ In his book, The Rocky Mountain Saints, Stenhouse goes so far as to suggest that Kimball was the source of Brigham Young's ideas concerning Adam:

Brother Heber had considerable pride in relating to his intimate friends that he was the source of Brigham's revelation on the "Adam-deity." In a moment of reverie Heber said: "Brother Brigham, I have an idea that Adam is not only our father, but our God." That was enough: Brigham snapped at the novelty, and announced it with all the flourish of a new made revelation.²

Stenhouse could safely make such a claim; Heber C. Kimball was dead, and, therefore, unable to refute what the writer believes to be a completely false accusation.

In 1852, Heber C. Kimball was quoted as saying:

When we escape from this earth, we suppose we are going to heaven? Do you suppose that you are going to the earth that Adam came from? that Eloheim came from? where Jehovah the Lord came from? No. When you have learned to become obedient to the Father that dwells upon this earth, to the Father and God of the earth, and obedient to the messengers he sends--when you have done all that, remember you are not going to leave this earth. You will never leave it until you become qualified, and capable, and capacitated to become a father in an earth yourselves.³

Here again, is revealed the concept of a patriarchal lineage of gods presiding over the many worlds and universes of eternity.

¹Supra, p. 22. Cf. J. of D., op. cit., V, 32.

²Stenhouse, op. cit., n. 561.

³J. of D., op. cit., I, 368.

The following statement by Heber C. Kimball provides another example of the confusion which can result from the loose application of the names, titles, and epithets ascribed to the Gods:

We have been taught that our Father and God, from whom we spring, called and appointed his servants to go and organize an earth, and, among the rest, he said to Adam, "You go along also and help all you can, you are going to inhabit it when it is organized, therefore go and assist in the good work." It reads in the Scriptures that the Lord did it, but the true rendering is, that the Almighty sent Jehovah and Michael to do the work.

.....

God the Father made Adam the Lord of this creation in the beginning.¹

One might conclude from this that "our Father and God," the "Lord," the "Almighty," and "God the Father" are all one and the same; and yet he hasn't actually said so. President Kimball speaks of the people having been "taught" thus and so, adding that the "true rendering" is otherwise. Certainly "God the Father" and "Adam" are not meant to be synonymous in this comment, for two distinct beings are referred to. Yet from other remarks made by him, it is apparent that he did not always use the terms "our Father and God" and "God the Father" synonymously either. Speaking on one occasion he said: "We often sing, 'This earth was once a garden place'² where God our Father dwelt, and took possession and a stand that mankind will take who attain to that honor."³ Here he implies the identification

¹Ibid., X, 235

²Cf., Joseph Smith, Jr., History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1909), II, 365.

³J. of D., op. cit., VIII, 243.

of Adam with "God our Father," but not necessarily with "God the Father." This identification is also manifest in these statements by him:

I have learned by experience that there is but one God that pertains to this people, and he is the God that pertains to this earth--the first man. That first man sent His own Son to redeem the world, to redeem His brethren; his life was taken, his blood shed, that our sins might be remitted. That Son called twelve men and ordained them to be Apostles, and when he departed, the keys of the kingdom were deposited with three of those Twelve, viz. Peter, James, and John.¹

The following year, November 8, 1857, he said:

Now, brethren, you have got a spirit in you, and that spirit was created and organized--was born and begotten by our Father and God before we ever took these bodies; and these bodies were formed by Him, and through Him, and of Him, just as much as the spirit was; for I will tell you He commenced and brought forth spirits; and then when he completed that work, He commenced and brought forth tabernacles for those spirits to dwell in. I came through Him, both spirit and body. God made the elements that they are made of, just as much as he made anything.²

Such were the views of Heber C. Kimball as to Adam's identity; their similarity to those of President Young is manifest.

W. W. Phelps.--This early Church leader said nothing conclusive in any public addresses of which the writer is aware. However, the following extract from a poem entitled "The Spirit," which he wrote and recited at the thirty-fifth semi-annual conference of the Church in 1865, may be indicative of his views:

O may the Saints be perfect
As God our Father was,
When he got back to Eden
By her celestial laws.³

¹Ibid., IV, 1.

²Ibid., VI, 31. Cf. IV, 334.

³Deseret News, Oct. 12, 1865. Infra, p. 91.

Eliza R. Snow.--Another who used the poetic medium to give expression to her feelings and beliefs was Eliza R. Snow, an outstanding early Mormon writer, and one of Joseph Smith's plural wives. There are two poems written by her which are of particular interest since they reveal her concept of Adam's position, and strongly suggest that she shared the views of President Young. Herewith is an extract from the first of these entitled, "To Mrs.--"

Adam, our father--Eve, our mother,
And Jesus Christ, our elder brother,
Are to my understanding shown:
My heart responds, they are my own.¹

The second, "The Ultimatum of Human Life," reads:

Adam, your God, like you on earth, has been
Subject to sorrow in a world of sin:
Through long gradation he arose to be
Cloth'd with the Godhead's might and majesty.
And what to him in his probative sphere,
Whether a Bishop, Deacon, Priest, or Seer?
Whate'er his offices and callings were,
He magnified them with assiduous care:
By his obedience he obtain'd the place
Of God and Father of this human race.

Obedience will the same bright garland weave,
As it has done for your great Mother, Eve,
For all her daughters on the earth, who will
All my requirements sacredly fulfill.
And what to Eve, though in her mortal life,
She'd been the first, the tenth, or fortieth wife?
What did she care, when in her lowest state,
Whether by fools, consider'd small, or great?
'Twas all the same with her--she prov'd her worth--
She's now the Goddess and the Queen of Earth.

"Life's ultimatum, unto those that live
As saints of God, and all my pow'rs receive;
Is still the onward, upward course to tread--

¹Eliza R. Snow, Poems, Religious, Historical and Political (Salt Lake City: L. D. S. Print. & Pub. Est., 1877), II, 196.

To stand as Adam and as Eve, the head
 Of an inheritance, a new-form'd earth,
 And to their spirit-race, give mortal birth--
 Give them experience in a world like this;
 Then lead them forth to everlasting bliss,
 Crown'd with salvation and eternal joy
 Where full perfection dwells without alloy."¹

The inference that the poetess regarded Adam and Eve as resurrected beings who had gained their exaltation and parented offspring prior to coming to this earth and "falling" is quite unmistakable. She will be referred to again.

Orson Pratt.--The writings of Orson Pratt do not fully support the poetic claims of Eliza R. Snow, nor the expressions of Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball. Pratt's difficulties with President Young and others of the authorities have been previously discussed. Yet, it should be understood that Orson Pratt and Brigham Young were in agreement on many doctrinal items. Pratt, like President Young, believed that there have always been divine Fathers and Sons;² that there are countless millions of persons who will gain godhood, "each one being a personal God, as much so as the God of this creation,"³ and that God was once mortal.⁴ They were also united in the commonly accepted doctrine that spirits do not marry or beget children;⁵ that those who gain exaltation will beget spiritual offspring and send them to other "mortal" worlds;⁶ and that Adam and Eve were immortal beings having bodies of flesh and

¹Ibid., II, 8-9. Infra, p. 108.

²J. of D., op. cit., XVIII, 288. ³Ibid., XIX, 314.

⁴Ibid., XVIII, 288. ⁵Ibid., XIV, 242.

⁶Ibid., XIV, 234.

bones, prior to their fall.¹ As for Adam, who is identified as Michael, the Archangel in the Doctrine and Covenants, being a God, Pratt agrees that he now is, explaining: "Some angels are Gods, and still possess the lower office called angels. Adam is called an Archangel, yet he is a God."²

But there did exist definite differences of opinion between the two leaders, as we have seen,³ which led to a doctrinal parting of the ways in certain areas. There were opinions expressed by Pratt which were incompatible with Brigham Young's views on Adam. For example, Pratt's belief, affirmed both before and after President Young's death that Adam was not "our God," but a pre-existent spirit child of that God;⁴ that Adam was made literally from the dust of the ground;⁵ and that Adam and Eve died, and were resurrected following the resurrection of Christ.⁶ One idea which is apparently unique with Pratt regarding Adam and Eve, is his belief that they had the power to beget immortal offspring prior to their fall.⁷ In what sense he meant this is not made clear by him.

Miscellaneous comments.--Brigham Young's successor, John Taylor, has left no clear cut evidence as to his views one way or the other. He did refer to God as "our Father, and the organizer of these bodies,"⁸ but in what sense He is the "organizer,"

¹Ibid., III, 344.

²Ibid., XIII, 187.

³Supra, p. 38 ff.

⁴J. of D., op. cit., I, 328

⁵Orson Pratt (ed.), The Seer (Washington D.C.: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1853-54), II, 42, 57, 65.

⁶J. of D., op. cit., XXI, 288. ⁷Ibid., ~~XI, 163-64.~~

⁸Ibid., XI, 163-65.

President Taylor did not say. There are but a few comments on the subject to be found in the publications of the Church in the late 1870's and 1880's. Elder Erastus Snow, an apostle, spoke to the effect that Adam was born a son of God and not literally created as a thing apart from God.¹ This same viewpoint was expressed in a public lecture by Elder John H. Kelson some eight years later in England.² The Contributor, the forerunner of The Improvement Era, carried two articles of interest in this period. One, entitled "Our Father and God," by a J. F. Gibbs, expressed the idea that those who become gods are the ones "most entitled to furnish mortal bodies for their spiritual offspring."³ The other, written by a Thomas W. Brookbank, commented: "Before Adam fell he was a resurrected man, that is, his physical body had been disorganized and then reorganized."⁴ The Deseret News printed the full text of a lecture given by Joseph E. Taylor in the Logan Temple in June, 1888. In this address, Taylor also affirmed that Adam was a resurrected man, and the Father of Christ. He used the April 9, 1852, discourse of Brigham Young, and the so-called "King Follett" funeral sermon given by Joseph Smith in April, 1844, in support of his contentions.⁵ It is apparent from these and other sources that the problem of the origin of the immortal body of Adam

¹Ibid., XIX, 323-24.

²Millennial Star, op. cit., XLVIII (October, 1886), 723.

³The Contributor, (Salt Lake City: Contributor Co., 1879-96), VI, 78.

⁴Ibid., VIII (April, 1887), 218. Infra, p. 84.

⁵Deseret Weekly News, Dec. 29, 1888, pp. 19-27.

continued to be a matter of much speculation. Later references will further substantiate this condition.

George Q. Cannon.--Apostle Cannon was editor of the Millennial Star in 1861 when it published a front page article entitled the "Origin of Man." The article quoted a series of statements by President Young, including some from his April 9, 1852 address, and a subsequent one given in August of that year.¹ It then went on to say:

President Young, in the foregoing passages, while substantiating the fact of the union of man's preexisting spirit with a bodily product of the "dust of the ground," enters more particularly into the modus operandi of that union. He unmistakably declares man's origin to be altogether of a celestial character--that not only is his spirit of heavenly descent, but his organization too,--that the latter is not taken from the lower animals, but from the originally celestial body of the great Father of humanity.... Look on this picture--Man, the offspring of an ape! And on this--Man, the image of God, his Father!²

Some twenty-eight years later, he told a general conference audience that: "There are two personages, the Father and the Son. God is the being who walked in the Garden of Eden, and who talked with the prophets. This revelation came to us in certainty."³ With the passage of the years Elder Cannon tended to more or less avoid the issue, as is indicated by this comment before the first Sunday school convention of the Church:

I was stopped yesterday afternoon by a young man, who wanted to know whether Adam was the Father of our Lord and Savior--whether he was the being we worshipped, etc. Now, we can get ourselves very easily puzzled, if we choose to do so, by speculating upon doctrines and principles of this

¹Supra, p. 18 ²Millennial Star, op. cit., XXIII (Oct. 1861), 654.

³Ibid., LI (May, 1889), 278.

character. The Lord has said through His Prophet that there are two personages in the Godhead. That ought to be sufficient for us at the present time.... Concerning the doctrine in regard to Adam and the Savior, the Prophet Brigham Young taught some things concerning that; but the First Presidency and the twelve do not think it wise to advocate these matters. It is sufficient to know we have a Father--God the Eternal Father, who reveals Himself by His Holy Spirit unto those who seek Him; and that Jesus Christ is His Son, our Redeemer, the Savior of the world.¹

Wilford Woodruff.--The fourth president of the Church, Wilford Woodruff, gave similar advice to the membership when he spoke before the general conference of April, 1895. Judging from the preceeding statement of George Q. Cannon, made three years later, not everyone heeded this admonition of President Woodruff:

How much longer I shall talk to this people I do not know; but I want to say this to all Israel: Cease troubling yourselves about who God is; who Adam is, who Christ is, who Jehovah is. For heaven's sake, let these things alone. Why trouble yourselves about these things? God has revealed Himself, and when the 121st section of the Doctrine and Covenants is fulfilled, whether there be one God or many gods they will be revealed to the children of men.... God is God. Christ is Christ. The Holy Ghost is the Holy Ghost. That should be enough for you and me to know. If we want to know anymore, wait till we get where God is in person. I say this because we are troubled every little while with inquiries from Elders anxious to know who God is, who Christ is, who Adam is. I say to the Elders of Israel, stop this.... We have had letter after letter from Elders abroad wanting to know concerning these things. Adam is the first man. He was placed in the garden of Eden, and is our great progenitor. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. That should be sufficient for us to know.²

Neither the Cannon statement, nor that made by President Woodruff is an actual refutation of anyone's opinions as

¹Proceedings of the First Sunday School Convention of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Nov. 23, 1898 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1899), pp. 87, 88.

²Millennial Star, LVII, 355-56.

to Adam's identity; both are primarily concerned with putting an end to further speculation on the matter. In that regards, what was not said appears to be perhaps more significant than what was said; later statements by certain Church leaders are far more definite as to what is and what is not doctrinal.

"Lucifer's Lantern."--In a notoriously anti-Mormon publication, Zion-Lucifer's Lantern, edited by A. T. Schroeder, there appeared an attack on the Church typical of that period:

The theologically bedizened sensualism of mormondom finds further manifestation in its conception of heaven. If I can get any intelligent idea of the after life of mormons by the study of their inane sermons it is something like this: There are two resurrection one of the spirit, the other of the flesh. (This is an error, for the Church teaches that the spirit never dies). After the second resurrection the spirit and the body are united and transplanted to some place in the universe where they gather up enough raw planetary material out of which to "organize a world."

To this world the resurrected man now hies himself and by virtue of the "sealing power" of the Mormon priesthood all the women who have been "sealed" to him for eternity are attracted or transplanted to this same planet. Here they set up housekeeping as Adam did in the Garden of Eden, and they will live eternal lives unless some walking or talking snake should put up a job on them as it did on Eve.

To this world of his own creation the man will be the God, even as Adam in Mormon theology is the God of this world. He is the King and his wives queens. Their kingdom will consist of their own "eternal progeny." Hence polygamy is essential because the extent and glory of every man's kingdom in the hereafter must depend on the number of wives sealed to him for eternity.

Such a conception of heaven is debasing because its highest pleasure consists only in the voluptuousness furnished by the Grecian hetaera, its only rewards are sensual, and the greatest means of exaltation is a fecundity that would make a jack-rabbit envious.¹

¹A. T. Schroeder, (ed.), Zion-Lucifer's Lantern (Salt Lake City: A. T. Schroeder, 1898-1900), No. IV, p. 65.

Such were the views of an "active" non-Mormon in 1899.

1900-Present

Ministerial views.--There were those of the clergy who also found occasion to attack "Mormonism" for some of its tenets which they considered incompatible with the truth as they saw it. The Rev. W. M. Paden of the Presbyterian church was such a one. Under the caption, "Presbyterians and Mormon God," the Deseret News carried a front page account of an address by him in which he said:

...I have not looked into the Adam God idea very much and there is more in the writing of Apostle F. D. Richards on the matter than in any of the others I have seen, but I think the church is ashamed of the idea. I find nothing about it in Dr. Talmage's book, or in any of B. H. Roberts' later writings. He whom we worship is no magnified man and we who worship are not minimized Gods.¹

The next day the Deseret News published a long editorial defending the Church's doctrine on God. The remarks of Rev. Paden were also referred to by B. H. Roberts, of the first council of Seventy, when he spoke before the Mutual Improvement Association conference a few days later.²

In 1907, the ministerial association prepared a review of a general statement of doctrine which the Church had published as a "Mormon Address to the World." The Salt Lake Herald quoted their review as follows:

As to the doctrine of Deity, the "Address" declares:
"We believe in the God-head, comprising the three individ-

¹Deseret News, Aug. 16, 1901.

²Improvement Era, (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1897--.), V (Dec., 1901), 129-30.

ual personages, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." As this declaration stands here, it will not perhaps suggest Trithoism or Materialism to Christians unfamiliar with Mormon theological terms. But when the full doctrine of the Deity, as taught in Mormon congregations is known, it will at once be seen that no Christian can accept it. In fact, the Mormon Church teaches: That God the Father has a material body of flesh and bones; that Adam is the God of the human race; that this Adam-God was physically begotten by another God; that the Gods were once as we are now; that there is a great multiplicity of Gods; that Jesus Christ was physically begotten by the Heavenly Father of Mary, His wife; that, as we have a Heavenly Father, so also we have a Heavenly Mother; that Jesus Himself was married, and was probably a polygamist--at least so it has been printed in their publications and taught among their people; and that the Holy Spirit is of material substance, capable of actual transmission from one person to another.¹

The ministerial association went on to quote from various Church works and sermons, among them the "Adam-God" sermon of Brigham Young, The Seer, etc. B. H. Roberts, again speaking in the annual M. I. A. conference of that year, denied their assertions relative to the identity of God, Christ's marriage, etc., stating that such were the views of individual men and not the official doctrines of the Church.

As late as 1929, Paden was still concerning himself with Adam and the Mormon church. Under a sub-heading entitled "Father Adam" he wrote:

It was one of Brigham Young's teachings that "Adam is our father and our God, the only God with whom we have to do." For years I have imagined that the Mormon authorities were ashamed of this doctrine or, at least, were inclined to consider it as an outburst of Brighamism rather than an inspired tenet of Mormonism. I was, therefore, surprised to find the old hymn to Adam and Eve in the new hymnal. It is under the title Sons of Michael. If you knew the secrets of the Mormon temple you would know that at a certain point of [sic] the Mormon endowment service temple workers or officials representing Elohim and Jehovah enter the Creation Room with the Archangel Michael, and that, Michael being put to sleep, Elohim makes passes over him,

¹Salt Lake Herald, June 4, 1907.

breathes upon him, and he wakens up as Adam. A little later a woman is made for him whom he calls Eve. In case your credentials will not get you through the temple, as is more than likely, you will find the light needed as regards the identification of Adam as Michael, in section 27 of the Doctrine and Covenants, where Joseph the Seer declares that "Michael is Adam, the father of all, the prince of all, the Ancient of Days." Here are three stanzas from the Mormon hymn of praise and loyalty to Adam and Eve. Remember that Joseph the Prophet says, "Michael is Adam."

Sons of Michael, He approaches!
Rise; the Ancient Father greet;
Bow, ye thousands, low before Him;
Minister before His feet.

Mother of our generations,
Glorious by great Michael's side,
Take thy children's adoration;
Endless with thy Lord preside.

Raise a chorus, sons of Michael,
Like old Oceans' roaring swell,
Till the mighty acclamation
Thro' resounding space doth tell
That the Ancient One doth reign
In His paradise again! (Hymn 334)¹

This particular hymn is still to be found in the latest hymn books used by the Church. However, the writer does not recall hearing it; in fact, he was unaware of its existence until Paden referred to it. Paden concludes his article on "Mormonism" by predicting: "The church will shed or cease to magnify its polytheistic teachings and its peculiar conceptions of personality, and it will unload old Adam, whom it has accepted in times past as the God of the human race."²

B. H. Roberts.--Like Orson Pratt, B. H. Roberts was a prolific writer and a brilliant thinker. His views on the

¹W. M. Paden, "Is Mormonism Changing?" Biblical Review, XIV (July, 1929), 391-392.

²Ibid., p. 400.

identity and nature of the Gods are perhaps nowhere better expressed than in his book, Mormon Doctrine of Deity, a writing which came out of the Roberts-Van Der Donckt discussions of 1902. In so far as Adam himself is concerned, Roberts has little, if anything, to say beyond that which is generally taught and understood in the Church. In his aforementioned book he does quote one of the most advanced of all of Brigham Young's sermons¹ with apparent tacit approval of its doctrines, although without comment.² He also acknowledges Adam as the "Grand Patriarch of our race" and the one who will eventually attain to the "goveronship" of this earth. Referring to Paden's idea that the Church was "ashamed" of Brigham Young's teachings he says:

Some of the sectarian ministers are saying that we "Mormons" are ashamed of the doctrine announced by President Brigham Young to the effect that Adam will thus be the God of this world. No, friends, it is not that we are ashamed of that doctrine. If you see any change come over our countenances when this doctrine is named, it is surprise, astonishment, that any one at all capable of grasping the largeness and extent of the universe--the grandeur of existence and the possibilities in man for growth, for progress, should be so lean of intellect, should have such a paucity of understanding, as to call it in question at all. That is what our change of countenance means--not shame for the doctrine Brigham Young taught.³

More miscellaneous views.--The Improvement Era carried the views of two Church writers who gave it as their opinion, based upon logic, that Adam was born of parents and not created

¹Supra, pp. 20, 21.

²B. H. Roberts, Mormon Doctrine of Deity (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1903), p. 259 ff.

³Ibid., pp. 42-43.

in some independent manner. One of these writers was John Attewall Wootton,¹ and the other, William Halls.² Thus the matter continued to provoke debate, prompting this reply from the editors of the Improvement Era to a question concerning it:

Priesthood Quorum's Table

Origin of Man.--"In just what manner did the mortal bodies of Adam and Eve come into existence on this earth?" This question comes from several High Priest's quorums. Of course all are familiar with the statements in Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:7; also in the Book of Moses, Pearl of Great Price, 2:27; and in the Book of Abraham 5:7....

These are the authentic statements of the scriptures, ancient and modern, and it is best to rest with these, until the Lord shall see fit to give more light on the subject. Whether the mortal bodies of man evolved in natural processes to present perfection, through the direction and power of God; whether the first parents of our generations, Adam and Eve, were transplanted from another sphere, with immortal tabernacles, which became corrupted through sin and the partaking of natural foods, in the process of time; whether they were born here in mortality, as other mortals have been, are questions not fully answered in the revealed word of God.³

Orson F. Whitney.--Another of the poets of the Church was Apostle Orson Ferguson Whitney. In his work Elias, An Epic of the Ages, which saw its first edition in 1904, he writes of the glory of Adam and speaks of those who are called to be the "Eve and Adam of some world":

One are the human twain, as sheath and sword--
Woman and man, the lady and the lord;
Each pair the Eve and Adam of some world
Perchance unborn, or into space unhurled.

.

Chosen, omniscient, children of the Sun,

¹Era, op. cit., III (June, 1900), 595-96.

²Ibid., XI (March, 1908), 325. Supra, p. 68.

³Era, op. cit., XIII (April, 1910), 570.

Offspring of Adam, Michael, Ancient One,
 Who comes anon his fiery throne to rear,
 His council summoning from far and near.
 Ten thousand times ten thousand bow the knee,
 And "Father" hail him, "King," eternally.¹

Charles W. Penrose.--Prior to becoming an apostle in 1904, Charles W. Penrose was editor of the Deseret News. In that capacity he wrote an editorial, entitled "A Piece of Impertinence," dealing with the "unwarranted liberty" taken by the Lamoni Herald² in publishing a private letter he had written to a Mr. Anderson in reply to a query from him regarding Brigham Young's teachings as to Adam.³ The editor then quoted the aforementioned letter as follows:

Salt Lake City, Utah
 Feb. 17, 1900

"Mr. Quincy Anderson, Ozark, Mo.:

"Dear Sir--In reply to your letter of inquiry. I have to say that President Brigham Young, in the discourse of which you speak, did not say that 'the Virgin Mary was not overshadowed by the Holy Ghost.' He did not say that it was 'Adam.' He did not say that 'Adam was our only God.' What he did say, on this subject, was that Jesus was not 'begotten' by the Holy Ghost. He taught that Jesus was the 'first-begotten' of God in the spirit, and the 'only begotten' of God in the flesh. As to Adam, he taught that he was God in the sense of being at the head of the human family. That he was Michael, the Ancient of Days, and in the resurrection would be at the head. In that way the whole human family will be related to him as his children, and in the Patriarchal order he will be the personage with whom they will have to do, and the only one in that capacity. President Young taught faith in that Eternal Being to whom Adam and all of his race should bow in humble reverence, who is our Eternal Father and the Father of our elder brother, Jesus

¹Orson F. Whitney, Elias, An Epic of the Ages. Revised and annotated edition. (Salt Lake City: 1914, pp. 76-77).

²The Lamoni Herald was the organ of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Iowa.

³Deseret Evening News, Mar. 21, 1900, p. 4.

Christ, and is the Great Elohim. The Journal of Discourses is not now in print and I do not know of any volume now on sale; however, I have given you the substance of President Young's teaching as to Adam. Hoping that this will be satisfactory, I am,

"Yours truly,
"C. W. Penrose,
"Editor, News."¹

The editor's letter to Anderson is followed by a statement which says in part:

Anyone who has carefully read the discourse...will perceive that our brief statement of its purport is correct, that there is nothing in one that is in conflict with the other; that we have neither "apologized for" nor disputed anything contained in that one sermon, which has been so much misunderstood and perverted by the enemies of our late venerable president. We are familiar with the doctrine he taught, and which he did not attempt fully to explain in the discourse which has been published. And it should be understood that the views entertained by that great leader and inspired servant of the Lord, were not expressed as principles to be accepted by mankind as essential to salvation. Like the Prophet Joseph Smith, his mind was enlightened as to many things which were beyond a common understanding, and the declaration which would bring upon him the opposition of the ignorant.

...There are men in the church who entertain ideas of a more advanced nature, some of which, although they may be expressed in public...are not put forth as binding upon any person....

That which President Young put forth in the discourse referred to, is not preached either to the Latter-day Saints or to the world as a part of the creed of the Church. In answering the letter of our correspondent we simply explained in private that which was asked in private, so that he might understand the tenor of President Young's views, and not with any intention of advocating or denying his doctrine, or of controverting anything that may have been said upon the subject by opponents of his utterances.²

There is a seeming inconsistency between the explanation of the "purport" of the discourse and the editor's assertion that what Brigham Young was supposedly saying "is not preached either to the Latter-day Saints or to the world." If the Penrose analy-

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

sis is correct, there is no reason why it should not be "preached," since it is no more than is accepted throughout the Church today and since the time of Joseph Smith. However, it is true that the accepted doctrine on Adam is not a part of the "creed" of the Church, for, formally speaking, it has none. This may well be what the editor had in mind.

Two years later, in a lengthy article entitled "Our Father Adam," Penrose took up the question of Adam's identity because it had been "discussed in many circles recently." He wrote that the sermon in question had, through additions, misinterpretations, etc., led to confusion and misunderstanding, and that: "The views then expressed were uttered in a single sermon, which created so much comment that the speaker did not afterwards enter into further details or explanations."¹ He explained the sermon this way:

The substance of President Young's declaration was, that the person who was placed in the Garden of Eden and became the great progenitor of the human race, is "our Father and our God." He said further, "and is the only God with whom we have to do." Careful reading of the entire address will show that President Young comprehended much more on this subject than he then made known, and that he regarded our Father Adam as the being who will stand, in eternity, at the head of the human family as the great Patriarch and ruler over all his posterity, and the Parent with whom they will have personal association and intercourse, as the representation and embodiment to them of all that constitutes the individuality of the Godhead.²

The article goes on to acknowledge Adam as Michael, the Archangel, the Ancient of days, and to say that his "body was fashioned out of the earth," that he died, was resurrected, and is .

¹Era, op. cit., V (Sept., 1902), 873-80.

²Ibid.

subject to "the great Elohim, the Eternal Father of us all."

Why President Young said Adam was "our God" is explained by

C. W. Penrose:

It was on the principle of the patriarchal order, in which the father is the priest and chief of the family, and will hold that place to all eternity that President Young proclaimed the supremacy of that person who is our Father and our God, because of our personal relationship to him.... President Young so taught the church.¹

He cites statements by Brigham Young on the greatness of God which show that he "believed in a supreme...deity" who is to be obeyed by Adam and his posterity; the Church "honors Adam in his station, but it worships God the Eternal Father." [This is the fundamental attitude of the Church in 1953 also.] The editor speaks of "opponents" of the Church who are "very fond of quoting isolated passages" from the discourse in question, while ignoring the "hundreds of allusions" to that "Supreme Being" by President Young on other occasions. All this for the purpose of "ridiculing our religion" and "representing to the world that we worship a human being for God...." "The Church ...has never formulated or adopted any theory concerning the subject treated upon by President Young as to Adam." After becoming a member of the First Presidency in 1911, President Penrose reaffirmed the inferiority in station of Adam to Jesus Christ, adding, "we do not worship Adam" but the Father.²

Apparently his reaffirmation did not satisfy some, for

¹Ibid.

²Conference Reports of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Print. & Pub. Est. 1880--), April, 1915, pp. 40-41.

the very next year he again addressed himself to the subject, saying: "There still remains, I can tell by the letters I have alluded to, an idea among some of the people that Adam was and is the Almighty and Eternal God."¹ Once more he discussed the patriarchal rule of Adam over his earthly posterity, remarking; "Now because of that and some other little matters that might be mentioned, the notion has taken hold of some of our brethren that Adam is the being that we should worship."²

The problem of the identification of Elohim (the Father), Jehovah (Christ), and Michael (Adam), is taken up by President Penrose in order to "draw a clear distinction between these individuals."³ In doing so, he emphatically declares Adam to be Michael only, not God the Father, the begetter of Jesus Christ. The address should be studied in its entirety since it gives an excellent statement of the present doctrine of the Church. It should suffice to say that this was not the last time President Penrose was obliged to discuss Adam's identity.

The First Presidency.--In the course of answering an inquiry about the origin of man--one which, like many others, was probably a reflection of the debate on so-called "Darwinism," then beginning to gain momentum--the then First Presidency, comprising President Joseph F. Smith and two counselors, John R. Winder and Anthon H. Lund, wrote what may be termed an official expression of the position which the Church took as

¹Ibid., April 6, 1916. p 16.

²Ibid., p. 17.

³Ibid., April, 1922, pp. 23-24.

to Adam:

Adam, our great progenitor, "the first man," was, like Christ, a pre-existent spirit, and like Christ he took upon him an appropriate body, the body of a man, and so became a "living soul."¹

Subsequently, the successor to Joseph F. Smith, Heber J. Grant, reiterated the same doctrine in 1925 when he had a portion of his predecessor's statement, including the above quote, printed verbatim in the Improvement Era over the signature of himself and his two counselors.²

President Smith and his counselors issued another official statement in 1912:

Speculations as to the career of Adam before he came to the earth are of no real value. We learn by revelation that he was Michael, the Archangel, and that he stands at the head of his posterity on earth. (Doctrine and Covenants, Sect. 107:53-56). Dogmatic assertions do not take the place of revelation, and we should be satisfied with that which is accepted as doctrine, and not discuss matters that, after all disputes, are merely matters of theory.³

The above may well have been prompted by a letter written to the First Presidency by one of the mission presidents, Samuel O. Bennion, inquiring for information relative to Brigham Young's "Adam-God" discourse. Because of the obvious importance of the First Presidency's reply in establishing official Church views, it is quoted in full:

Your question concerning Adam has not been answered before because of a pressure of important business. We now respond briefly, but, we hope, plainly. You speak of "the assertion made by Brigham Young that Jesus was begotten of the Father in the flesh by our father Adam, and that Adam is the father of Jesus Christ and not the Holy Ghost," and you say that "elders are challenged by certain

¹Era, op. cit., Nov., 1909, p. 80.

²Ibid., Sept. 1925, p. 1090.

³Era, op. cit., March, 1912, p. 417.

critics to prove this."

If you will carefully examine the sermon to which you refer, in the Journal of Discourses, Vol. I, you will discover that, while President Young denied that Jesus was "begotten by the Holy Ghost," he did not affirm, in so many words, that "Adam is the father of Jesus Christ in the flesh." He said, "Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden and who is our Father in Heaven." Who is "our Father in Heaven"? Here is what President Young said about Him: "Our Father in Heaven begat all the spirits that ever were or ever will be upon this earth and they were born spirits in the eternal world. Then the Lord by His power and wisdom organized the mortal tabernacles of man." Was He in the garden of Eden? Surely. He gave commandments to Adam and Eve; He was their Father in Heaven; they worshipped Him and taught their children after the fall to worship and obey Him in the name of the Son who was to come.

But President Young went on to show that our father Adam --that is, our earthly father,--the progenitor of the race of man, stands at our head, being "Michael the Archangel, the Ancient of Days," and that he was not fashioned from the earth like an adobe, but begotten by His Father in Heaven.

Adam is called in the Bible "the son of God" (Luke 3: 38). It was our Father in Heaven who begat the spirit of Him who was the "Firstborn" of all the spirits that came to this earth and who was also His Father by the Virgin Mary, making Him "the Only Begotten in the flesh." Read Luke 1:26-35. Where is Jesus called the Only Begotten of the Holy Ghost? He is always singled out as "the Only Begotten of the Father." (John 14:3, 16, 18 etc.) The Holy Ghost came upon Mary, and her conception was under that influence, even the spirit of life; our Father in Heaven was the Father of the Son of Mary, to whom the Savior prayed, as did our earthly father Adam.

When President Young asked, "Who is the Father?", he was speaking of Adam as the father of our earthly bodies, who is at our head, as revealed in Doctrine and Covenants, Section 107, verses 53-56. In that sense he is one of the Gods referred to in numerous scriptures, and particularly by Christ (John 10:34-36). He is the great Patriarch, the Ancient of Days, who will stand in his place as "a prince over us forever", and with whom we shall "have to do", as each family will have to do with its head, according to the Holy Patriarchal order. Our Father Adam, perfected and glorified as a God, will be a being who will carry out the behests of the great Eloheim in relation to his posterity.

While, as Paul puts it, "There be Gods many and Lords many (whether in Heaven or in earth) to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ by whom are all things." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints worship Him and Him alone, who is the Father of Jesus Christ, whom he worshipped, whom Adam worshipped, and who is God the Eternal Father of us all.¹

The actual writing of the letter may have been done by C. W. Penrose, since it is very similar in tone, content, and style to his previously quoted statements. In 1916, the First Presidency and the quorum of the twelve apostles issued an official treatise on the Father and the Son which further clarifies the teachings of the Church regarding their identities.²

Seminary lectures.--In 1921, a series of lectures, given by various prominent speakers in the Church, were held at the Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. One of the topics, the fall of man, was discussed by John M. Whitaker who advanced the opinion that Adam was a resurrected man:

...I am going to assume responsibility for making this statement, that man came here, was placed here as an immortal, glorified, resurrected being. I want to make myself clear, because these lectures are going to the brethren, and if they want to correct them they can.

.....

I believe it was that fruit that changed and modified Adam's resurrected body, and again made it subject to death. Is that clear? At least, I want you to get my idea....and may I say the Church does not teach this as doctrine. Many of the authorities do. Others teach that

¹Letter from the First Presidency (Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund, Chas. W. Penrose) to S. O. Bennion, Feb. 20, 1912.

²J. E. Talmage, Articles of Faith (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1937), pp. 465-73.

a body was prepared in some way for Adam and Eve.¹

Although Whitaker believed Adam to be a resurrected man, he admitted that Adam was not worshipped by the Church, nor presumably by himself, as God the Father. Apostle Melvin J. Ballard, who also spoke the same day, seemingly agreed with Whitaker, for he said: "what Brother Whitaker has said I agree with, with reference to his fall and man's coming here."²

Ballard then suggested that Adam had two ways of regaining his lost immortality, one was by partaking of the fruit of the tree of life and so recovering "from the mortal condition apparently," and the other was through the atonement of Jesus Christ:

Well, man has fallen. How can he get back? What is the antidote? The antidote was the tree of life, but he was driven out from it. Now what else? The antidote was the death of a God, and Jesus Christ was a God before he came into this world....³

Joseph Fielding Smith.--Perhaps no other living leader of the Church is so highly respected for his knowledge and understanding of its principles and doctrines as is Joseph Fielding Smith, president of the quorum of the twelve apostles, and a son of former President Joseph F. Smith. He does not subscribe to the views just quoted as to Adam being a resurrected man, nor to the modern concepts of biological evolution:

Even in the Church there are a scattered few who are now advocating and contending that this earth was peopled with a race--perhaps many races--long before the days of Adam.⁴ These men desire, of course, to square the teachings

¹Brigham Young University, Seminary Lectures (Provo, Utah: 1921), Lecture X, June 24, 1921. Typed Ms.

²Ibid., Lecture XI.

³Ibid.

⁴Orson Hyde was of this opinion. J. of D., op. cit., II, 79.

in the Bible with the teachings of modern science and philosophy in regard to the age of the earth and life upon it. If you hear anyone talking this way, you may answer them by saying that the doctrine of "pre-Adamites" is not a doctrine of the Church, and is not advocated or countenanced in the Church. There is no warrant in the scripture, not an authentic word, to sustain it. But the revelations of the Lord reveal Adam as the "Ancient of days," Michael, the Archangel who is appointed to have jurisdiction through all time and eternity on this earth and to preside over it, under the direction of Jesus Christ. He is called by the Lord, the "first man of ALL men" upon the earth, and the Prophet Joseph Smith has said: "Commencing with Adam, who was the first man, who is spoken of in Daniel as being the 'Ancient of Days,' or in other words, the first and oldest of all." This is the doctrine which has been taught by authority in the Church regarding Adam.

.....

The Lord has not seen fit to tell us definitely just how Adam came for we are not ready to receive that truth. He did not come here a resurrected being to die again for we are taught most clearly that those who pass through the resurrection receive eternal life, and can die no more.... The time will come when we shall be informed all about Adam and the manner of creation for the Lord has promised that when he comes he will make all things known.¹

John A. Widtsoe.--The subject of Adam's identity has received attention at least three times within the last eighteen years in Church publications. The first of these was an article in the Church Section of the Deseret News entitled, "Adam, Our Patriarchal Father"² by S. D. Moore, Jr. The second, "What Are The Facts Concerning The So-Called Adam-God Theory?" by Apostle John A. Widtsoe, was first published in the Improvement Era in 1938, under the general heading "Evidences and Reconciliations."³

¹The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine (Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1910-40), XXI (June, 1930), 147 ff.

²Deseret News, April 13, 1935.

³The third article is considered in Chapter Five.

Elder Widtsoe labels the idea that Adam is God the Father, the parent of Jesus Christ, the "well-worn Adam-God myth," from which a "long series of absurd and false deductions have been made." Citing the April 9, 1852, discourse he says:

Certain statements there made are confusing if read superficially, but very clear if read with their context. Enemies of President Brigham Young and of the Church have taken advantage of the opportunity and have used these statements repeatedly and widely to do injury to the reputation of President Young and the Mormon people. An honest reading of this sermon and of other reported discourses of President Brigham Young proves that the great second President of the Church held no such views as have been put into his mouth in the form of the Adam-God myth.¹

Elder Widtsoe explains that it was in the sense of patriarchal leadership over his own earthly progeny that Adam was declared to be "our Father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do" by Brigham Young. "Nowhere is it suggested that Adam is God, the Father, whose child Adam himself was." As proof of this contention, the fact that the sermon itself makes a clear distinction between Elohim, Jehovah, and Michael is cited. Elder Widtsoe further points out that in another discourse, Adam is identified as a "son" of the Lord and thus: "Clearly President Young here distinguishes between God, the Father, and Adam, the first man." In refuting the notion that Adam was the father of Christ, he says:

This deduction cannot be made fairly, in view of the context or of his other published utterances on the subject. Adam and Eve were not the only persons in the Garden of Eden, for "they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day" (Genesis 3:8). President Young undoubtedly had that person in mind, for he did not say Adam, but "our Father in heaven."

¹ John A. Widtsoe, Evidences and Reconciliations (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1943), pp. 287-290.

In many discourses, President Young refers to Jesus as the Only Begotten of the Father, which would not have been true, had Adam been the earthly father of Jesus.... It seems unnecessary to offer more evidence that Brigham Young held the accepted doctrine of the Church, that God, the Father, and not Adam, is the earthly Father of Jesus.

In all this, President Young merely followed the established doctrine of the Church.¹

.....

The perspective of years brings out the remarkable fact, that, though the enemies of the Latter-day Saints have had access, in printed form, to the hundreds of discourses of Brigham Young, only half a dozen statements have been useful to the calumniators of the founder of Utah. Of these, the sermon of April 9, 1852, which has been quoted most frequently, presents no errors of fact or doctrine, if read understandingly and honestly.²

With the words of John A. Widtsoe, we come to an end of the views of others from 1852 to the present time, as they have appeared in various Church and non-Church publications. There have been claims and counter-claims, theories, facts, and fictions, according to the position one assumes relative to the matter. (There are, however, two points which emerge as irrefutable facts. The first is that the assertion made by some that the Church secretly acknowledges Adam as God the Father, the parent of Christ, is without any foundation in truth. This "myth" has been repeatedly exploded by one authority after another in the last fifty years.

The second, concomitant with the first, is that the actual doctrines of the Church regarding Adam have been set forth in equal clarity. He is identified as Michael, the Archangel, a spirit child of God who was "fore-ordained" to

¹Ibid., p. 289.

Supra, pp. 78, 79, 83.

²Ibid., p. 290.

Supra, p. 78.

come to this earth and enter into a body of immortal flesh and bone which was, in some manner, prepared for him. He, together with his wife, Eve, fell to a mortal state. Thereafter they begat mortal children, obeyed the "Gospel laws" taught them by heavenly beings, and eventually died a physical death. Following the resurrection of Christ, they were themselves resurrected as "celestial beings" and are now enthroned with all the majesty and honor due them as progenitors of the race on earth. In the future, Adam will return to the earth as the "Ancient of days," primarily to return all of the "keys" of authority held by God's servants in the different dispensations of this world to Jesus Christ, his superior. Upon the completion of his mission pertaining to this earth, Christ will, in turn, give an accounting of his "stewardship," and surrender all authority, to his Father and God. This is the substance of official Church doctrine regarding Adam.¹

¹Joseph Fielding Smith, The Way To Perfection (Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1946), Chapters 8-12, 40.

CHAPTER V

JOSEPH SMITH AND THE STANDARD WORKS

To complete the circle of this study, it will be necessary and desirable to review the beginnings of Latter-day Saint theology relative to Adam. This requires a consideration of the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and of his associates prior to 1852, and a brief appraisal of the "standard works" of the Church: the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. There are three questions stemming from the early period of the Church for which answers are sought in this chapter: (1) what is to be found in the earliest publications of the Church concerning Adam's identity? (2) what did Joseph Smith teach? (3) what do the standard works as such reveal?

Early Publications of the Church

It was only about five months after the Church was organized on April 6, 1830, that the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation from God identifying Adam as Michael, the Archangel, the Ancient of days.¹ The passing years saw other revelations reiterate this doctrine, and it has never

¹Doctrine and Covenants (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Salt Lake City, 1923), sect. 27:11.

been challenged by any Church authority since the original announcement was made. The first newspaper published by the Church, the Evening and Morning Star, spoke of Adam as "the first member of the church of Christ on earth, and the first high priest after the order of the Son of God."¹ Of the passing of Adam from this world it said: "Adam fell asleep in the Lord only fifty-seven years before Zion, even the city of Enoch, was taken up to the bosom of God...."² Later, when the Evening and Morning Star was published by Oliver Cowdery in Kirtland, Ohio, it asked: "who could the Ancient of days be but our father Adam? surely none other...."³

W. W. Phelps, who edited the paper in Missouri in 1832-1833, wrote two poems dealing with the fall of man and the lost glories of Eden and Adam-ondi-Ahman, the place where Adam met with his righteous posterity before his death. In the poem, "Adam-ondi-Ahman," he implicitly identifies Christ as Jehovah, God's Old Testament name, in writing that prior to the spread of evil "men did live a holy race, and worship Jesus face to face, in Adam-ondi-Ahman."⁴ It might be well to compare this expression from Phelps with the previously quoted stanza from his later poem, "The Spirit."⁵ The second of his two early poems, "O Adam," while perhaps indicating a certain interest

¹Evening and Morning Star (Independence, Mo.: F. G. Williams and Co., 1832-33), March, 1833.

²Ibid., April, 1833, p. 169. ³Ibid., May, 1834, p. 308.

⁴Latter-day Saints Messenger and Advocate (Kirtland, O.: F. G. Williams & Co., 1834-37), I (June, 1835), 144.

⁵Suora, p. 64.

in that first dispensation, possibly as a result of the publication of the writings of Moses and later, of Abraham, has no especial significance for this study.¹

The Times and Seasons, then edited by Don Carlos Smith, suggests a literal interpretation of the "dust of the earth" origin of Adam's physical body in saying: "No language need be plainer than this, that is, that God before he framed this world, had laid the scheme of life and salvation, and before he ormed [sic] Adam's dust into man; he had predestined that the human family should be made children to himself, through Jesus Christ...."²

In an account of a series of lectures given in New York City by a "Mr. Adams" (probably George J.), a Mormon missionary, we read:

On Sunday Mr. Adams lectured on the second coming of Christ, and gave much light on that subject, showing that it would take place before this present generation shall pass away. He proved also, if the Bible is true, that the second advent must take place before 1880. In the course of the lecture he threw much light on the subject of the "Ancient of Days," showing him not to be the Lord Jesus Christ, nor God the Father, but that he is old Father Adam, who shall sit as a great patriarch at the head of the whole family; when the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, the Son of Man shall come with the clouds, and come to the Ancient of Days, and the saints should take the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, according to Daniel vii.³

This resume' was sent to the Times and Seasons as a letter to the editor by "A Lover of Truth." It is an important item

¹The Times & Seasons (Nauvoo, Ill.: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1839-46), VI, 879.

²Ibid., Dec. 15, 1840, II, 244.

³Ibid., III (July, 1842), 835.

since it is one of the few the writer found that definitely states who Adam was not, as well as who he was. It is also of interest because it implies that the idea of Adam being the Father or the Son may have even then been a matter of speculation.

Another positive assertion that Adam was not God was made by Orson Pratt when speaking before a conference of the church, attended by the Prophet Joseph, in 1843:

But who is this Ancient of Days that is to act this glorious and conspicuous part in the grand councils of the last days, and finally deliver up the kingdom organized and prepared, into the hands of the Great King? It cannot be the Son of God, for he afterwards comes to the Ancient of Days. It cannot be the Father, for if the Saints were prepared to meet the Father and set (sic) in council with him, they would also be prepared to meet the Son, for the glory of the Father is equal to that of the Son....The Ancient of Days then, is ADAM--the great progenitor of the human race.¹

This belief, expressed by Orson Pratt in his younger years, never changed, he taught this same doctrine all his life.

In 1841, Benjamin Winchester edited a short-lived periodical for the Church in Philadelphia called The Gospel Reflector. In an article on the future millenium, later reprinted in the Times and Seasons, he wrote: "Our first parents were placed in the metropolis of this lower creation" where they could "converse with God face to face as we converse with our friends," and where "the seraphs of heaven" were their companions. In answering the question: "how could Adam's fall affect the whole of creation?" he says that "Adam was placed in the garden or capital (sic) of the whole earth,

¹Ibid., IV (May 15, 1843).

and power was given unto him to sway his sceptre over all things upon earth; therefore, when he fell from the presence of the Lord, the whole of his dominions fell also."¹

Parley Parker Pratt, the brother of Orson Pratt, was like his brother, an apostle. In 1845, he was acting editor of The Prophet, another Church periodical, published in New York City. As will be seen from his remarks in connection with the nature of family organization in the "celestial" kingdom, he shared his brother's views:

His most gracious and venerable majesty, King Adam, with his royal consort, Queen Eve, will appear at the head of the whole great family of the redeemed, and will be crowned in their midst as a king and priest forever after the Son of God. They will then be arrayed in garments white as snow and will take their seats on the throne, in the midst of the paradise of God on the earth, to reign forever and ever....

This venerable patriarch and sovereign will hold lawful jurisdiction over Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, ... Saints of all ages and dispensations, who will all reverence and obey him as their venerable father and lawful sovereign. ... Adam and all the patriarchs, kings, and prophets will be subject unto Christ, because He was in the eternal world, the first born of every creature, and the beginning of the creation of God. Hence in the patriarchal order, He rules by right of birth.²

With the Pratt item, we come to an end of the available, pertinent material to be found in the earliest publications of the Church. In view of the abundant later references to Adam, we might have expected more. And yet, there would be no valid reason for this; Adam was not then a subject of particular

¹Benjamin Winchester (ed.), The Gospel Reflector (Philadelphia: Brown, Bicking, & Guilbert, 1841), May 1, 15, 1841.

²The Elder's Journal (Chattanooga, Tenn.: Southern States Mission, 1903-07), IV, 96.

interest to the membership; then, as now, he was accepted as Michael, the Archangel, the Ancient of days, the "great progenitor of the human race," nothing more. Then too, even a cursory glance at the early history of Mormonism will reveal the simple fact that the Church was far too busy getting born, catching its breath, and struggling for survival in an alien world, to be much concerned with anything so admittedly academic as the identity of Adam.

What Did Joseph Smith Teach?

Aside from the standard works, the most fruitful sources of Joseph Smith's teachings are his own journal record known as the History of the Church, and the Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, edited by Joseph Fielding Smith. These combine to give a fairly complete account of his doctrines.

In describing a vision of the celestial kingdom given him in January, 1836, the Prophet told of "the blazing throne of God, whereon was seated the Father and the Son." "I saw Fathers Adam and Abraham, and my father and mother...."¹ Stenhouse renders the Prophet's vision somewhat differently: "I saw father Adam, and Abraham, and Michael, and my father and mother, my brother Alvin, etc. etc."² The writer is unable to explain the disparagement between the two versions. But in a cynical comment on the vision, Stenhouse wrote:

Joseph does not state how he came in possession of these names. He makes some blunder here or somewhere else, for

¹Joseph Smith, op. cit., II, 380.

²Stenhouse, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

he evidently makes Adam and Michael two distinct persons, while in other revelations he sets forth that Adam is Michael. Such confusion does not tend to increase faith.¹

Vilate M. Kimball, the wife of Heber C. Kimball, writes of another supposed vision given Joseph Smith in March, 1836, which the writer has been unable to substantiate. It is possible that she is confused on her date and is actually alluding to the January, 1836, vision. However, she tells of the Prophet being shown the twelve apostles arriving at "the gate of the celestial city":

There Father Adam stood and opened the gate to them, and as they entered he embraced them one by one, and kissed them. He then led them to the throne of God, and then the Saviour embraced each of them in the presence of God. He saw that they all had beautiful heads of hair and all looked alike. The impression this vision left on Brother Joseph's mind was of so acute a nature, that he never could refrain from weeping while rehearsing it.²

In July, 1839, in response to numerous inquiries, the Prophet dealt with the subject of Priesthood. In doing so, he declared that the Priesthood was first given to Adam prior to this earth's creation, and that when the keys of the priesthood are "revealed from heaven, it is by Adam's authority."³ The Prophet continues:

Daniel in his seventh chapter speaks of the Ancient of Days; he means the oldest man, our Father Adam, Michael, he will call his children together and hold a council with them to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man. He (Adam) is the father of the human family, and presides over the spirits of all men, and all that have had the keys must stand before him in this grand council. This may take

¹Ibid., n. 63.

²Edward W. Tullidge, The Women of Mormondom (New York: 1877), p. 110.

³Joseph Smith, op. cit., III, 386.

place before some of us leave this stage of action. The Son of Man stands before him, and there is given him glory and dominion. Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ, that which was delivered to him as holding the keys of the universe, but retains his standing as head of the human family.

...Our Savior speaks of children and says, Their angels always stand before my Father. The Father called all spirits before Him at the creation of man, and organized them. He (Adam) is the head, and was told to multiply. The keys were first given to him, and by him to others. He will have to give an account of his stewardship, and they to him.

.....

Christ is the Great High Priest; Adam next.¹

In referring to the authorship of this doctrine, B. H. Roberts said:

It is generally supposed that Brigham Young was the author of the doctrine which places Adam as the patriarchal head of the human race, and ascribes to him the dignity of future presidency over this earth and its inhabitants, when the work of redemption shall have been completed. Those who read the Prophet's treatise on the Priesthood in the text above will have their opinions corrected upon this subject; for clearly it is the word of the Lord through the Prophet Joseph Smith which established that doctrine. The utterances of President Brigham Young but repeat and expound the doctrine which the Prophet here sets forth.²

The Roberts statement is supported by Helen Mar Whitney, one of the Prophet's plural wives and a daughter of Vilate and Heber C. Kimball. In refuting the accusation of Joseph Smith III, the Prophet's son and the first president of the Reorganized Church, that Brigham Young was the author of the idea that "Adam is our Father and our God" she wrote:

Brigham Young did not happen to be the author of this doctrine, and to prove the truth of my assertion, I will produce some of the Prophet's teachings, given May 16, 1841. These were written, together with other things, by his clerk, William Clayton, as they were spoken, and as I had the privilege of reading them when quite a young woman, I took the

¹Ibid., pp. 386-388.

²Ibid., n. 388.

liberty of copying them. The copy I have retained....¹

She then quotes the instructions of Joseph Smith on the Priesthood as found in the History of the Church under the date of July, 1839; her date, May 16, 1841, is apparently an error.²

Commenting on Joseph Smith's teachings she writes:

When the Saints first heard this doctrine advanced it looked strange and unnatural to them; it was strong meat and required a little time before it could be digested; but this was owing to the narrow, contracted ideas which had been handed down from generation to generation by our forefathers. We were like babes and had always been fed upon milk; but, as Jesus said, we have to be taught "here a little and there a little." When I was able to comprehend it, it appeared quite consistent. There is something in this doctrine that is very home like, grand and beautiful to reflect upon, and it is very simple and comprehensive. It teaches us that we are all the children of the same parent, whose love was so great that He gave His beloved Son, our Elder Brother, Jesus Christ, to redeem us from the fall. ...It teaches us that our Father was once mortal, and that if we remain faithful we will finally become as He is--immortal even if we must first pay the penalty for the transgression of our first parents.³

Helen Whitney also refers to other teachings by the Prophet, including his famous "King Follett" sermon of April, 1844, and his address on the plurality of the Gods given in June of that year. She denies that Brigham Young was the first to teach the plurality of the Gods and that the Father has a Father, etc. She quotes Joseph Smith, III, as saying: "Ponder it well. Are not those who teach and those who endorse Brigham Young's Adam God doctrine guilty of damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them?" Her reply is:

¹Helen M. Whitney, Plural Marriage (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructors Office, 1882), pp. 30, 31.

²Joseph Smith, op. cit., III, 385ff.

³Plural Marriage, op. cit., p. 31.

"Now if he feels that it is his duty to proclaim against this people and deny the doctrines which his father felt authorized of God to teach as revelation from on high, I shall only regret it for his own and his father's sake."¹

Joseph Smith composed another treatise on Priesthood which was read to the October, 1840, conference of the Church. In it he reiterates that Adam was "the first and father of all, not only by progeny, but the first to hold the spiritual blessings, to whom was made known the plan of ordinances for the salvation of his posterity unto the end, and to whom Christ was first revealed...."² In carrying out his work, God appointed Adam to watch over the ordinances of salvation and to "reveal them from heaven to man, or to send angels to reveal them." The Prophet adds: "These [ministering] angels are under the direction of Michael or Adam, who acts under the direction of the Lord."³ That there are those above Adam is further indicated by the Prophet's statements that: "God called Adam by His own voice," that Adam was given commandments by God, that it was Jehovah who endowed Adam with the powers and blessings which he enjoyed in the beginning, etc.⁴

King Follett discourse.--It is generally conceded that one of the greatest addresses, content-wise, ever given publicly by the Prophet Joseph Smith was the King Follett funeral sermon of April 7, 1844. Of it Elder John A. Widtsoe once said:

¹Ibid., pp. 36, 37.

²Joseph Smith, op. cit., IV, 207.

³Ibid., p. 208.

⁴Ibid., pp. 208-210.

That conference was remarkable in many ways. The Prophet's mind seemed to sweep, as it were, the horizons of eternity. He touched upon the things that are far beyond--the things of eternity. This sermon is known in our history as the "King Follett Sermon," a most remarkable document. I am glad that Elder Joseph Fielding Smith included it in his Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

He taught revealing doctrines never clearly told before, since Christ, or perhaps since Adam, of the nature of God, our Heavenly Father, and of the destiny of man. The doctrine as there taught has been incorporated into our thinking and writing, in our books and sermons, without knowing exactly when or how it was first stated.¹

It will not be possible to more than summarize a few of the Prophet's views therein as they relate, in a more or less general way, to this study. The Prophet said that : "God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens"; and that "Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked and talked and conversed with him, as one man talks and communes with another."² The Prophet denied that God was always God for "he was once a man like us; yea that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ did; and I will show it from the Bible."³ Joseph Smith went on to say that God the Father once laid down his life and took it up again as Christ did, and that those who seek Godhood must learn how to do so "the same as all Gods have done before you." The Prophet relates the patriarchal concept of growing dominions through one's progeny to the Father and Son in these words:

¹Conference Reports, op. cit., April 7, 1944, p. 95.

²Teachings of Joseph Smith, op. cit., p. 345.

³Ibid., pp. 345-46.

What did Jesus do? Why; I do the things I saw my Father do when worlds came rolling into existence. My Father worked out his kingdom with fear and trembling, and I must do the same; and when I get my kingdom, I shall present it to my Father, so that he may obtain kingdom upon kingdom, and it will exalt him in glory. He will then take a higher exaltation, and I will take his place, and thereby become exalted myself. So that Jesus treads in the tracks of his Father, and inherits what God did before; and God is thus glorified and exalted in the salvation and exaltation of all his children.¹

Referring to the creation of this earth, he said: "The head God called together the Gods and sat in grand council to bring forth the world. The grand councilors sat at the head in yonder heavens and contemplated the creation of the worlds which were created at the time."² And thus, "In the beginning, the head of the Gods called a council of the Gods; and they came together and concocted a plan to create the world and people it."³

Plurality of the Gods.--One of the Prophet's remarks in the King Follett sermon was: "Would to God that I had forty days and nights in which to tell you all! I would let you know that I am not a 'fallen prophet.'"⁴ Although he probably did not tell "all," he did tell more in regards to the Gods in another great discourse given a scant eleven days before his death. In a sense, it was a continuation of his earlier April sermon, for the theme is essentially the same. Joseph Smith reaffirms the plurality of the Gods, "but to us there is but one God--that is pertaining to us; and he is

¹Ibid., pp. 347-48.

²Ibid., pp. 348-49.

³Ibid., p. 349.

⁴Ibid., p. 355.

in all and through all."¹ The Prophet explained that: "In the beginning the heads of the Gods organized the heavens and the earth," following which, "the head one of the Gods said, 'Let us make man in our own image,'" and that the "heads of the Gods appointed one God for us...."² That the Father of Jesus Christ, is not the first of all the Gods, is affirmed by Joseph:

If Abraham reasoned thus--If Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and John discovered that God the Father of Jesus Christ had a Father³, you may suppose that He had a Father also. Was there ever a son without a father? And where was there ever a father without first being a son?⁴ Whenever did a tree or anything spring into existence without a progenitor? And everything comes in this way. Paul says that which is earthly is in the likeness of that which is heavenly, Hence (sic) if Jesus had a Father, can we not believe that He had a Father also? I despise the idea of being scared to death at such a doctrine, for the Bible is full of it.

I want you to pay particular attention to what I am saying. Jesus said that the Father wrought precisely in the same way as His Father had done before Him. As the Father had done before? He laid down His life, and took it up the same as His Father had done before.⁵

The Prophet's reference to the Father having a Father, etc., is not unlike Brigham Young's allusion to the Father, Grandfather, and Great Grandfather of Adam's children. And in saying that all things have progenitors, and that "everything comes in this way," he is also in apparent harmony with the procreative views

¹Ibid., pp. 370-71.

²Ibid., p. 372.

³The Prophet had used Rev. 1:6 as his text.

⁴Brigham Young once said, "Brother Kimball quoted a saying of the Prophet, that he would not worship a God who had not a Father; and I do not know that he would if he had not a mother; the one would be as absurd as the other." J. of D., IX, 286.

⁵Teachings of Joseph Smith, op. cit., p. 373.

of his successor. The statement, "every man who reigns in celestial glory is a God to his dominions,"¹ concludes the summarization of Joseph Smith's published pronouncements relative to this study. Clearly, he is the source of Church doctrine which established Adam as Michael the Archangel, the Ancient of days, a chosen servant of God who came to this earth to become the progenitor of the human race. President Young, and his successors in the presidency, have unitedly taught that doctrine. As for the views expressed by Brigham Young and others which go beyond this, it is readily apparent that the Prophet did not, at any time, refer to Adam in his published remarks as "our Father and our God"--not even in a patriarchal sense. He did affirm Adam's majesty and rule over his earthly progeny, but nowhere did he actually identify Adam as the father of their spirit bodies as well. The nearest thing to such an inference is his acknowledgement of Adam as the "father of the human family" who "presides over the spirits of all men." This might be interpreted to mean the begetter of all men's spirits, but such an interpretation is not justly warranted; to preside is one thing, to beget is quite another. Some have considered the failure of the Prophet to actually say that Michael or Adam was a spirit prior to coming to this earth to be significant. But again, this does not prove that the Prophet didn't believe him to be such. Conclusive proof must be based on what is said, not on what is supposedly left unsaid; the absence of evidence is never completely decisive,

¹Teachings of Joseph Smith, op. cit., p. 374.

either pro or con.

The revelations, writings, and sermons of Joseph Smith combine to identify Adam as one who is in a subservient position to the Father and the Son;¹ for he is explicitly declared to be subject to them, to the Lord, to God. The argument that the identity of these, and other, heavenly personages is sometimes vague and inconclusive, does not justify their identification with any other personages. The manifest teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith do not warrant, nor support such fanciful suppositions.

It is generally understood, for it is an obvious fact, that the Prophet withheld some of his views from the general Church membership. Judging from his own statements, and those of others, he did this because the Saints at large were unprepared for all that he might have revealed to them. For example, in one address he said: "I could explain a hundred fold more than I ever have of the glories of the kingdoms manifested to me in the vision¹, were I permitted, and were the people prepared to receive them."² On another occasion he said that if the church knew all the commandments of God that they would reject half of them through prejudice and ignorance. Similar remarks by him are to be found throughout his comments and writings. In private conversation with Brigham Young in Kirtland, the Prophet told him: "Brother Brigham, if I was [sic] to reveal to this people what the Lord

¹Doctrine and Covenants, section 76.

²Teachings of Joseph Smith, op. cit., p. 305.

has revealed to me, there is not a man or woman would stay with me."¹ His feelings regarding the limitations of the Saints is further borne out by President Wilford Woodruff:

Brother Joseph used a great many methods of testing the integrity of men; and he taught a great many things which, in consequence of tradition, required prayer, faith, and a testimony from the Lord, before they could be believed by many of the Saints. His mind was opened by the visions of the Almighty, and the Lord taught him many things by vision and revelation that were never taught publicly in his days; for the people could not bear the flood of intelligence which God poured into his mind.²

In speaking of the earth's creation and peopling, Heber C. Kimball commented: "The Prophet Joseph frequently spoke of these things in the revelations which he gave, but the people generally did not understand them, but to those who did, they were cheering, they had a tendency to gladden the heart, and enlighten the mind."³ President Lorenzo Snow, in citing his famous couplet, "As man is God once was, as God is, man may become," said that this doctrine had been taught to the apostles by the Prophet Joseph Smith, although it had not been made public until sometime later.⁴ Plural marriage is another good example of a doctrine which was not made public until years after it was first revealed and put into practice among some of the leadership of the Church.⁵

But what of the Prophet's teachings which he never

¹J. of D., op. cit., IX, 294. ²Ibid., V. 83-84.

³Ibid., X, 235.

⁴Millennial Star, op. cit., LVI, 772.

⁵Orson F. Whitney, Life of Heber C. Kimball (Salt Lake City: Kimball Family, 1888), 331ff.

made public, or which were never clearly stamped with his approval? There have been a number of doctrines, some quite fantastic, of which he is ostensibly the author. The "White Horse Prophecy," the belief that the lost tribes are on an adjacent star near the earth, that there are people on the moon, etc., all these are ascribed to him. Perhaps he did so teach, in part, but which part? No one seems to be sure. H. W. Naisbitt told an audience: "it is said that Joseph Smith the Prophet taught that Adam had two wives."¹ Who said it? Such a declaration is not to be found in his public pronouncements. Nor was the writer able to validate the ideas assigned to Joseph Smith by E. W. Tullidge in his book The Women of Mormondom, a series of short biographical sketches of prominent early Mormon women. According to this work, the Prophet taught the "sisters in the temple at Kirtland" more advanced doctrines than he apparently ever presented publicly. This is not exactly in harmony with the Prophet's statement to the effect that: "I am bold to declare I have taught all the strong doctrines publicly, and always teach stronger doctrines in public than in private."² Perhaps it is just a matter of what he meant by "strong doctrine"; if so, it is a moot point. However, Tullidge, an unfortunate victim of victorian rhetoric, with elaborate, and oft times redundant, verbal detail, recounts some of the Prophet's private doctrines. Briefly, Joseph Smith is said to have told the sisters that Adam is

¹J. of D., op. cit., XXVI, 115.

²Teachings of Joseph Smith, op. cit., p. 370.

God the Father, the Father of the spirits of all men born on this earth, that both Adam and Eve came to this earth as resurrected beings with the pre-determined intention of "falling" to a state of mortality, etc.¹ In pointing out that the concept of a "Heavenly Mother" was not revealed to the world until the time of Joseph Smith, he says:

The oracle of this last grand truth of women's divinity and of her eternal Mother as the partner with the Father in the creation of worlds, is none other the Mormon Church. It was revealed in the glorious theology of Joseph and established by Brigham in the vast patriarchal system which he has made firm as the foundations of the earth, by proclaiming Adam as our Father and God. The Father is first in name and order, but the Mother is with him--these twain, one from the beginning.²

Such were the views ascribed to Joseph Smith and Brigham Young by Tullidge in 1876. However, such were not the views he later claimed for the Prophet. In June, 1876, Tullidge referred to Brigham Young as "the fitting successor of the Mormon Prophet, as the modern Moses, and the founder of Utah."³ But in his revised edition of the Life of Joseph the Prophet, published by the Reorganized Church in 1880, his ardor had supposedly cooled somewhat⁴, for he wrote of him:

Brigham Young, after the death of the Prophet, for a time confounded the views of the Church by sending forth a "proclamation to all the world" that "Adam was our Father and God."

¹Women of Mormondom, op. cit., p. 176 ff.

²Ibid., pp. 193-194.

³E. W. Tullidge, Life of Brigham Young (New York: 1877) p. 456.

⁴Tullidge, like Stenhouse, became involved with the "Godbeites" and was excommunicated from the Church. Supra, p. 38, n. 1.

....Wondrous difference between Joseph's revealing of Jesus Christ, the God of all creation, the very Eternal Father; but it truly illustrates the apostasy and perversion which followed the death of the Prophet.¹

This turn-about on the part of Tullidge, under "Reorganite" pressure, does much to discredit his claims. Yet the fact that Eliza R. Snow collaborated with him in the preparation of The Women of Mormondom does lend some weight and respectability to the work. She was widely known and loved by the Saints, and remained a faithful member of the Church until her death. Her apparent admiration for Brigham Young may have led her to quite innocently identify the Prophet's teachings with those of his successor, although this is quite unlikely.

It is impossible to accurately determine what, if anything, Joseph Smith revealed that he did not make public. Who can say what may or may not have been said in secret, if it was retained in secret? The public utterances of the Prophet, including his written revelations, are far and away our firmest, and therefore, our safest ground. To go beyond them is to cross into the realm of human speculation, over a bridge upheld by little more than the tenuous strands of possibility.

Adam's Identity in the Standard Works

The Bible

The name "Adam" is mentioned thirty times in the Bible: twenty-one times in the Old Testament and nine times in the New Testament. Eighteen of the Old Testament references

¹Edward W. Tullidge, Life of Joseph the Prophet, 2d ed. rev.; (Plano, Ill.: Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1880). p. 439.

are found in chapters two, three, four, and five of Genesis. Of the origin of Adam's physical body, Genesis merely says: "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."¹ As for Eve, we are told that the Lord God "caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam" during which one of his ribs was removed, "and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man."² That the name "Adam" is something of a title, having a symbolic connotation, is apparent from: "Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."³

Luke infers that Adam was literally a son of God since, in tracing Christ's genealogy, he makes no distinction between the nature of the fatherhood of Adam over Seth and the Fatherhood of God over Adam, but says: "...Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God."⁴ It is interesting to note that Christ is not known to have ever mentioned Adam by name, although he spoke of Abraham about twenty-six times in the Gospels. Paul defined Adam as the "first man"⁵ explaining elsewhere that "Adam was first formed, then Eve."⁶

Only the book of Daniel contains the title "Ancient of days"; there it is used three times in connection with Daniel's vision of a latter-day judgment at which the "Ancient of days" shall sit, and "one like the Son of man" appear before him,

¹Gen. 2:7

²Gen. 2:21, 22.

³Gen. 5:2.

⁴Luke 3:38.

⁵I Cor. 15:45.

⁶I Tim. 2:13.

etc.¹ Only the Latter-day Saints identify Adam with this personage.

Michael is listed five times by name in the Bible, three of these being in Daniel where he is referred to as "Michael, your prince."² Of him Daniel prophesied: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."³ Jude tells of Michael the Archangel contending with the devil "about the body of Moses,"⁴ and previous to that, when there was "war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found anymore in heaven."⁵ An early, non-canonical writing, The Shepherd of Hermas, contains an interesting reference to the power and position of the archangel, Michael, which significantly parallels the L. D. S. doctrine of patriarchal rule:

And the great and glorious angel is Michael, who has power over this people and governs them; for this is he who put the law into the hearts of those who believe. Therefore he looks after those to whom he gave it to see if they have really kept it.⁶

Elsewhere in the Shepherd of Hermas Michael is referred to as

¹Dan. 7:9-22. ²Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1. ³Dan. 12:1

⁴Jude 9.

⁵Rev. 12:7, 8.

⁶The Apostolic Fathers, trans. Kirsopp Lake. The Shepherd of Hermas (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946) II, Sim. VIII. iii. 3, p. 197. Cf. W. Lueken, Michael, (Gottingen: 1898).

the son of God;¹ the translator, Kirsopp Lake, was frankly puzzled by this seeming incongruity.

The Book of Mormon

Neither "Michael" nor the "Ancient of days" is to be found in the Book of Mormon although "Adam" is mentioned some twenty-five times. The Book of Mormon does not contain an account of the world's or of man's creation, but confines itself to the "fall," its consequences, etc. Nor does it profess to be a complete religious history; it is only concerned with certain events subsequent to circa 2300 B. C. Then too, the Nephite prophets were in possession of the so-called brass plates of Laban containing a record of the creation, thus making it unnecessary to recount it on either the large or small plates of Nephi, or on the plates of Mormon.² Even Moroni, the abridger of the Jaredite history known as the "Book of Ether," omits the creation story, saying:

And as I suppose that the first part of this record, which speaks concerning the creation of the world, and also of Adam, and the account from that time even to the great tower, and whatsoever things transpired among the children of men until that time, is had among the Jews-- Therefore I do not write those things which transpired from the days of Adam until that time; but they are had upon the plates; and whoso findeth them, the same will have power that he may get the full account.³

It is evident that the Book of Mormon was not the source of Joseph Smith's identification of Adam as Michael, the

¹Ibid., Sim. ix.

²Book of Mormon, trans. Joseph Smith, Jr. (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1947). I Nephi 5:11.

³Ibid., Ether 1:3, 4.

Ancient of days; this became known only after its publication in March, 1830.

The Doctrine and Covenants

Although Joseph Smith spoke of it, it is not known just when he heard the voice of Michael, the Archangel.¹ But it was apparently while living in Harmony, Pa., the summer of 1830 that the revelation proclaiming the "first man"² to be "Michael, or Adam, the father of all, the prince of all, the ancient of days"³ was received. The following month, September, the Prophet received another revelation in which the "Lord God" spoke of Michael as "mine archangel," and of Adam as "your father, whom I created" and made "an agent unto himself," and who, in time, "became subject to the will of the devil":⁴

Wherefore, I, the Lord God, caused that he should be cast out from the Garden of Eden, from my presence, because of his transgression, wherein he became spiritually dead, which is the first death.... But, behold, I say unto you that I, the Lord God, gave unto Adam and unto his seed, that they should not die as to the temporal death, until I, the Lord God, should send forth angels to declare unto them repentance and redemption, through faith on the name of mine Only Begotten Son.⁵

In March, 1832, the Prophet was told by the Lord that He had "appointed Michael your prince, and established his feet, and set him upon high, and given unto him the keys of salvation under the counsel and direction of the Holy One, who is without beginning of days or end of life."⁶ And in the future

¹Doctrine and Covenants, op. cit., 128:21.

²Ibid., 84:16.

³Ibid., 27:11.

⁴Ibid., 29:26-41.

⁵Ibid., 29:41-42.

⁶Ibid., 78:16.

"battle of the great God," which is to be fought between "Michael, the seventh angel, even the archangel," and the devil, Michael will gain the victory for the saints of God and overcome "him who seeketh the throne of him who sitteth upon the throne, even the Lamb." This battle is to be fought at the end of the earth's millennial peace. The Doctrine and Covenants infers the death of Adam in relation to the ordination of his righteous sons to the Priesthood; for Seth was "ordained by Adam at the age of sixty-nine years, and was blessed by him three years previous to his (Adam's) death...."¹ It is again mentioned in connection with the great convocation of Adam's righteous posterity in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman:²

And the Lord appeared unto them, and they rose up and blessed Adam, and called him Michael, the prince, the archangel. And the Lord administered comfort unto Adam, and said unto him: I have set thee to be at the head; a multitude of nations shall come of thee, and thou art a prince over them forever. And Adam stood up in the midst of the congregation; and, notwithstanding he was bowed down with age, being full of the Holy Ghost, predicted whatsoever should befall his posterity unto the latest generation.³

Pearl of Great Price

Some of the writings of Moses and of Abraham are to be found in the compilation known as the Pearl of Great Price. Although both refer to the creation, neither contains the name, Michael, or the title, the "Ancient of days." The two writings are remarkably alike, and yet significantly different. A major difference is Abraham's use of the term "the Gods" rather than the "I God" found in Moses. Joseph Smith's

¹Ibid., 107:42 ²Ibid., 116. ³Ibid., 107:53-56.

avowal that the "head Gods"¹ were the creators of earth and man is probably based upon Abraham's polytheism; especially where the account says: "And then the Lord said: Let us go down. And they went down at the beginning, and they, that is the Gods, organized and formed the heavens and the earth."²

It is accepted Church doctrine, clearly taught in the endowment, that one of these Gods was Michael, or Adam, and that he played a major role in the formation of this earth. When it was fully prepared, "the Gods went down to organize man in their own image, in the image of the Gods to form they him, male and female to form they them."³ Prior to this physical embodiment, man was likewise literally begotten in the anthropomorphic image of his Heavenly Father as a spirit child of God.⁴

The Genesis explanation of man's earthly origin, also written by Moses, is almost identical with that to be found in the Book of Moses where we read:

And I, the Lord God, formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul, the first flesh upon the earth, the first man also; nevertheless, all things were before created; but spiritually were they created and made according to my word.⁵

Abraham adds that after "the Gods formed man from the dust of the ground," they took "the man's spirit, and put it into him."⁶

¹Teachings of Joseph Smith, op. cit., pp. 371-73.

²Pearl of Great Price, Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1948), Abraham 4:1.

³Ibid., Abr. 4:7; Moses 2:27. ⁴Ibid., Moses 3:5-7; Abr. 5:5-7.

⁵Ibid., Moses 3:7.

⁶Ibid., Abr. 5:7.

The Pearl of Great Price, like Genesis, locates Eve's physical origin in one of Adam's ribs.¹ W. Cleon Skousen, an outstanding student of Latter-day Saint theology, has proffered a possible interpretation of the expression "dust of the ground" as used in connection with man's earthly beginning.² He points out that in a message from God to Adam, one which he was to relay to his children, it was said:

That by reason of transgression cometh the fall, which fall bringeth death, and inasmuch as ye were born into the world by water, and blood, and the spirit, which I have made, and so became of dust a living soul, even so ye must be born again into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit, and be cleansed by blood, even the blood of mine Only Begotten....³

Since the same "dust of the ground" concept used in reference to Adam's birth is used in relation to the births of his offspring, and since Adam, like his more righteous posterity, was "Born again," or baptized in water and in Spirit,⁴ it might be reasoned that Adam's physical body was produced in the same manner as those of his children; otherwise the symbolism in the baptismal ordinance, a rebirth of water and of spirit, becomes lost upon him.

Again, like Genesis, the Pearl of Great Price defines Adam as the male and female, the man and the woman, in combination.⁵ The woman was called Eve "because she was the mother of all living; for thus have I, the Lord God, called the first

¹Ibid., Moses 3:21-22; Abr. 5:14-16.

²W. Cleon Skousen, The First Two Thousand Years (Unpub. MS).

³Pearl of Great Price, op. cit., Moses 6:59.

⁴Ibid., 6:64-65.

⁵Ibid., 6:9.

of all women, which are many."¹ Likewise, "the first man of all men have I called Adam, which is many."²

We are informed that "all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died."³ He was the first and greatest of the patriarchs, a "son of God, with whom God, himself, conversed."⁴

A final word.--In concluding this study, the writer quotes from the most recent exposition to be published by the Church on the identity and position of Adam. It comes from the pen of Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, president of the quorum of the twelve:

Adam was among the intelligences spoken of by the Lord to Abraham who were appointed to be rulers on this earth. He was Michael, a prince, and son of God chosen to come to this earth and stand at the head of his posterity, holding the "keys of salvation under the counsel and direction of the Holy One, who is without beginning of days or end of life." (D. & C. 78:16.) This Holy One is Jesus Christ. On the earth Michael was known as Adam. In the pre-existent state he was a spirit like the others of our Father's children. In the Book of Genesis (1:26 and 2:7), we are told that Adam obtained his body from the dust of the earth, and that he was not subject to death is inferred in the commandment the Lord gave him, that if he transgressed the divine commandment and ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he should surely die. (Gen. 2:17). In the Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 2:22) we are positively informed that Adam would have lived forever in the garden if he had not partaken of the forbidden fruit. So Adam was in no sense mortal until after his transgression. That his immortal spirit came from another world is verily true, just as it is true of each one of us, for we all lived in the spirit existence before we came into this world and obtained bodies which inherited mortality through the fall of Adam.

We are also informed in the scriptures that before Adam and Eve transgressed they were without children, and "the

¹Ibid., 4:26.

²Ibid., 1:34.

³Ibid., 6:12.

⁴Ibid., 6:22.

fall was essential to the peopling of the earth with their offspring. When the truth in relation to the consequences of the fall were made known to Adam and Eve, they rejoiced, and Eve said: "...Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient." (Moses 5:11.) Lehi also understood this truth, and he said: "Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy." (2 Nephi 2:25.)¹

Here is the official doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; here the matter rests.

¹Era, op. cit., July, 1953, p. 503.

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ABSTRACT

The Latter-day Saints are unique in that, unlike other Christian denominations, they do not view Adam, the first man, as a renegade from Paradise who should properly be blamed for the carnal, sensual, and devilish nature of the world we live in. On the contrary, they honor him as one of the two greatest universal benefactors of all time. For had it not been for his "fore-ordained" fall from immortal glory to mortal dust and darkness, the spirit children of God would have been deprived of the earthly embodiment which alone makes salvation and eventual equality with the Gods possible. Without that sacrifice on the part of Adam, there would have been no mortal life upon this globe, nor death, nor any Redeemer to conquer it and make real the "hope within us" of immortality and eternal life.

Adam is identified as Michael, the Archangel, the "Ancient of days" the great progenitor and patriarch of the human race, by the Latter-day Saints. This knowledge came through revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1830. And there are some who maintain that Adam is in reality the father of spirits as well. This belief is primarily based upon the remarks of Brigham Young, the Prophet's successor in the presidency of the Church. However, the Church does not advocate this doctrine. It has consistently and determindly

held to the basic teachings of Joseph Smith relative to Adam. From time to time the question of Adam's identity has arisen among some of the membership causing a certain amount of discussion and debate; but the problem has usually been treated as an academic flight of fancy more than anything else. Even some Church authorities have given vent to theories of their own design, but these too have lacked the imprimatur of official doctrine.

Non-Mormons, especially those affiliated with other religious denominations, are quite fond of acting as censors of Latter-day Saint teachings. Not infrequently, they have taken it upon themselves to upbraid the Church for its base anthropomorphic concept of God, as well as the great respect it evidences for Adam. Their particular target has been the so-called "Adam-God" sermon given by President Young in 1852. They delight in citing it as proof of a doctrine of which the Latter-day Saints should be "ashamed." The fact that the Church has repeatedly denied the acceptance of Adam as God the Father has not diminished, to any appreciable degree, the use, by those elements which seek to "ridicule" Mormonism, of the aforementioned address.

Where there is freedom of thought, there will be at least occasional differences of opinion. Within the Church, such freedom does exist. None are denied the right to speculate upon the unknown so long as they do not betray the fundamental tenets of the faith, or preach as doctrine "the commandments of men." That such speculation has given rise to

individual ideas and interpretations of certain moot points of doctrine is true; yet they are essentially minor differences, differences which in no way affect the basic principles of salvation. Those who comprise the leadership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stand four-square behind those universal truths which remain the bed-rock upon which the Church is founded. It is to their united pronouncements that one must turn for official doctrine.